1507/90.

THE

ARMENIAN;

OR,

THE GHOST SEER.

A HISTORY FOUNDED ON FACT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF

F. SCHILLER,

AUTHOR OF THE ROBBERS, DON CARLOS, &c.

BY

THE REV. W. RENDER.

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Work now preſented to the Public originally appeared in a German periodical publication entitled, THALIA, *under the name of* The Ghoſt Seer, a True Hiſtory, found among the Papers of Count O**; *and was continued from time to time. It has been ſuppoſed, and it is not improbable, that it was intended to expoſe the impoſtures of the ſect of the* Illuminati, *which was then beginning to extend itſelf in Germany. A tranſlation of the firſt volume was publiſhed about five years ago, with a very imperfect*

imperfect and unsatisfactory account of the conclusion of the History. It was presumed, that a faithful translation of the whole Work would be highly acceptable to those who have read that volume, and to all the admirers of the genius of Schiller.

THE

GHOST SEER.

I SHALL relate an event, which to many will appear incredible, but of the greateſt part of which I myſelf was an eye witneſs. The few, who are acquainted with a certain political occurrence, will (if theſe leaves ſhould find them alive) have a perfect key to the publication; but without this Key it will be looked upon as an addition to the hiſtory of deceit and artifice ſo often impoſed upon mankind. The boldneſs of the undertaking, which malice was able to conjecture and to purſue, muſt excite aſtoniſhment, and alſo the methods which they were able to invent, to ſecure themſelves in their projects. Genuine, bold truth, will conduct my pen; for when theſe leaves go into the world, I ſhall probably be no more, and ſhall never experience the credit with which they are received.

It was on my return to Courland, in the year 17—, about the time of the Carnival, that I paid a viſit to the Prince of W.... in Venice. We had known each other in the

P.... military ſervice, and renewed here an acquaintance which peace had interrupted. As I wiſhed to ſee the remarkable city of Venice, the Prince eaſily perſuaded me to bear him company, and to delay my departure from hence until his remittances, which were expected every day, arrived. We agreed to live together as long as our ſtay at Venice ſhould laſt, and the Prince was ſo kind as to offer to ſhare his habitation with me at the Moor Hotel. He lived in diſguiſe, becauſe he wiſhed to enjoy himſelf, and his little income did not permit him to maintain the dignity of his rank. Two cavaliers, upon whoſe ſecreſy he could entirely rely, compoſed (beſides ſome truſty ſervants) his whole houſehold. He ſhunned expences more from temperance than œconomy. He fled from diverſions of all kinds; and at the age of thirty-five years, it may be ſaid, that he had reſiſted all the charms of that voluptuous city. The fair ſex was not regarded by him: gravity, and an almoſt profound melancholy, overſhadowed his mind. His paſſions were ſtill, but obſtinate to exceſs; his choice ſlow and fearful; his attachment warm and laſting. Locked up in his own viſionary ideas, he often was a ſtranger to the world about him; and, conſcious of his own deficiency in the knowledge of mankind, he very ſeldom obſerved that line of conduct which influences thoſe who are wary and ſuſpicious. Nobody was ever born to be governed more than he, without being the dupe of artifice and cunning: at the ſame time he was unterrified and deciſive. As ſoon as he was once convinced, he poſſeſſed equal courage to combat

BRITISH MUSEUM 15 62 MAY

combat an acknowledged prejudice, and to die for a new one. As the third prince of his houſe, he could not have any views for the ſovereignty; his ambition, therefore, on that point, was never awakened: his paſſion had taken quite another direction. Conſcious of his own averſion to being governed by the opinion of others, he never forced his own upon any perſon as a law. The peaceable paths of ſolitude, and a private life, were the ſummit of his wiſhes. He read much, but without ſelection. A narrow education, together with being initiated into the military ſervice early in life, ſerved to check all application to the ſtudy of literature—all the knowledge which he afterwards acquired added but little to his ideas. He was a Proteſtant, as all his family had been, by birth, not by enquiry, which he never attempted, though he was, in a certain epoch of his life, an enthuſiaſt—he never, to my knowledge, became a free-maſon.

One evening, we, as uſual, took a walk by ourſelves, very well maſked, upon St. Mark's Place. As it grew late, and the people were diſperſing, the Prince obſerved that a maſk followed us every where. The maſk was an Arminian, and walked alone. We doubled our ſteps, and ſought by ſtriking into different turns of our road to loſe him, but in vain, for he always remained cloſe behind us.

"You have not had, I hope, any intrigue here?" ſaid the Prince at laſt to me. "The huſbands at Venice are very dangerous."

"I know not one lady," I replied.

"Let us ſit down here, and ſpeak German," he continued. "I imagine they miſtake us for ſome other perſons."

We ſat down upon a ſtone bench, and expected that the maſk would paſs by. He came ſtraight towards us, and took his ſeat very cloſe by the ſide of the Prince; who drew out his watch, and ſaid rather loud in French, riſing at the ſame time from his ſeat:

"Nine—come! we forget that they wait for us at the *Louvre*."

This was only a pretence to deceive the maſk as to our rout.

"Nine!" repeated the maſk in the ſame language, very expreſſively and ſlowly. "Wiſh yourſelf joy, Prince, (whilſt he called him by his right name) *at nine o'clock he died*."

With this he roſe and went away: we looked at one another very much amazed.

"Who is dead?" ſaid the Prince, after a long ſilence.

"Let us follow him," ſaid I, "and requeſt an explanation."

We hurried through all the bye ways of St. Mark, but the maſk was not to be found. Chagrined at our bad ſucceſs, we proceeded to our hotel. The Prince ſpoke not a word in our way home, but walked apart from me, apparently in deep reflection, and greatly agitated, as he afterwards confeſſed to me. When we got home, aſſuming an air of gaiety—

"It is indeed laughable," ſaid he, "that a madman ſhould thus be able to diſturb the tranquillity of a perſon's mind by a couple of words."

We wiſhed each other a good night, and as ſoon as I was in my own room, I noted in my pocket-book the day and the hour when this extraordinary event happened—it was upon a Thurſday.

Thurſday. The following evening the Prince ſaid to me:

"Let us take a walk again to St. Mark's Place, and try to diſcover this myſterious Arminian. I am very anxious to unravel this adventure."

I agreed to the propoſal, and we remained till eleven o'clock wandering about the place: the Arminian was no where to be ſeen. We repeated our viſits the four following evenings, and each time with the ſame bad ſucceſs. The ſixth evening, when we left our hotel, I had the foreſight (whether by deſign or not I cannot ſay) to tell the ſervants where we might be found, if there ſhould be any enquiry after us. The Prince obſerved this, and praiſed my attention with a ſmiling countenance. There was a great crowd upon St. Mark's Place when we arrived there; and we ſcarcely had gone thirty ſteps, when I obſerved the Arminian, who puſhed himſelf through the crowd in great haſte, and ſeemed to be in the act of ſearching for ſomebody. We were juſt upon the point of reaching him, when the Baron F—— one of the Prince's companions, came breathleſs towards us, and delivered a letter to the Prince.

"It is ſealed black," ſaid he, "and we thought that it might contain intelligence of great conſequence."

It ſtruck me like a thunderbolt. The Prince went to a lamp, and began to read the contents.

"My couſin is dead," he cried.

"When?" ſaid I, interrupting him haſtily.

He

He once more read the letter.

" Laſt Thurſday, at nine o'clock in the evening."

We ſcarcely had time to recover ourſelves from our ſurpriſe, when the Arminian appeared.

" You are known here, gracious Sire," ſaid he to the Prince. " Haſten to the Moor: you'll find there ambaſſadors from the Senate, and do not heſitate to accept the honour which they will offer you. The Baron F—— forgot to tell you that your remittances are arrived."

He left us precipitately and mingled with the crowd. We haſtened to our hotel, and found every thing as the Arminian had announced to us. Three noblemen of the Republic were arrived ready to receive the Prince, and to conduct him with ſplendor to the aſſembly, where the firſt nobility of the city expected him. He had juſt time enough to let me underſtand, by a ſlight hint, that he wiſhed me to ſet up for him. About eleven o'clock at night he returned. He came into the room ſerious and thoughtful; and, after having diſmiſſed the ſervants, he ſeized me by the hand.

" Count," he ſaid, with the words of Hamlet, " there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philoſophy."

" Gracious Sir," I replied, " you ſeem to forget that you are enriched with the proſpect of a ſovereignty *."

" Do

* The deceaſed was the hereditary Prince, the only ſon of the reigning ——— who was in years, very ſickly, and without the leaſt proſpect of having an heir to his dominions. An uncle of our Prince, almoſt in the ſame ſituation, now alone ſtood between him and the throne. I am obliged to mention this circumſtance, as the ſubject will be treated of in the Work. GERMAN EDITOR.

" Do not remind me of that," ſaid the Prince, " I have ſomething of greater importance to me than a crown that now claims my attention, if that Arminian has not been at gueſs work."

" How is that poſſible, Prince ?" I replied.

" Then will I reſign all my princely hope for the habit of a monk."

The following evening we went together earlier to the market-place. A heavy ſhower of rain obliged us to take ſhelter in a coffee-houſe, where we obſerved a number of perſons at a gaming table. The Prince placed himſelf behind the chair of a Spaniard to ſee the game played, whilſt I went into an adjoining room to read the papers. A little time afterwards I heard a noiſe. Before the arrival of the Prince, the Spaniard univerſally loſt, but ſince he entered, the latter won upon every card. The whole game was totally changed, and the bank was in danger of being challenged by the pointer, whom this lucky reverſe of fortune had made bolder. The Venetian, who kept it, ſaid to the Prince in a ſurly tone—

" You have changed the luck, and ſhall quit the table."

The Prince looked at him coolly, without giving him an anſwer, and kept his place, but the Venetian repeated his command in French. The latter thought that the Prince did not underſtand either language; and, addreſſing himſelf to the company with a ſneering grin—

" Tell me, Gentlemen," ſaid he, " how I ſhall make myſelf underſtood by this fool ?"

Hereupon he ſtood up, and would have ſtruck the Prince; but the Prince's patience forſaking

forſaking him, he did not wait for the attack, but ſeized the Venetian by the throat, and daſhed him with violence on the ground. This circumſtance threw the whole houſe into confuſion. Upon hearing the uproar, I ran into the room, and unguardedly called him by his name.

" Take care, Prince," ſaid I, incautiouſly, " we are in Venice!"

The name of the Prince excited an univerſal ſilence, and ſoon after a confuſed murmur ran through the aſſembly, which appeared to me to have a dangerous tendency. The Italians preſent crowded round each other, and walked aſide. They ſoon quitted the room, one after the other, and we found ourſelves left only with the Spaniard and ſeveral Frenchmen.

" You are loſt, gracious Sir," ſaid a Frenchman, " if you do not leave the city directly. The Venetian, whom you have handled ſo roughly, is rich enough to hire a bravo—it will only coſt him fifty ſequins to be revenged by your death."

The Spaniard, in concert with the Frenchmen, offered to conduct the Prince with ſafety to his houſe. We were ſtanding thus conſulting what was beſt to be done, when the door of the room was ſuddenly opened, and ſeveral officers of the *State Inquiſition* entered. They produced an order from the government, in which we were both commanded to follow them immediately. They conducted us under a ſtrong eſcort to a canal, where a boat waited for us. We were ordered to embark; but before we quitted it, our eyes were blindfolded;

folded; and, upon our landing, we found that they led us up a ſtone ſtair-caſe, and then through a long winding paſſage over arches, as we could diſcover by the repeated echoes that ſounded under our feet. We ſoon arrived at another ſtair-caſe, which in twenty-ſix ſteps brought us to the bottom. We then heard a door creek upon its hinges; and when they took the bandage from our eyes, we found ourſelves in a ſpacious hall, encircled by an aſſembly of venerable old men. All appeared in ſable robes, and the hall hung with black cloth, was dimly lighted by a few ſcattered tapers. A deadly ſilence prevailed through the aſſembly, which cauſed in us an awful ſenſation too powerful to be deſcribed. One of the old men, who appeared to be the principal ſtate inquiſitor, came near to the Prince, and ſpoke to him with a ſolemn countenance, whilſt another ſet before him the Venetian,

"Do you acknowledge this man to be the ſame that you uſed ſo roughly in the coffee-houſe?"

"Yes!" anſwered the Prince.

Then turning to the priſoner—

"Is that the perſon you would have aſſaſſinated this evening?"

The priſoner anſwered, "Yes."

Immediately the judges opened the circle, and we ſaw, with the utmoſt horror, the head of the Venetian ſeparated from his ſhoulders.

"Are you ſatisfied with this ſacrifice?" ſaid the State Inquiſitor.

The Prince fainted in the arms of his conductors.

" Go," he continued, with a terrible voice, as he turned towards me, " and think in future more favourably of the adminiſtration of juſtice in Venice."

We could not learn who our unknown friend was, who had thus delivered us, by the arm of juſtice, from the diabolical plans of the aſſaſſin.

We reached our habitation terrified in the extreme. It was midnight. The chamberlain Z—— waited for us upon the ſtairs with great impatience.

" How lucky it was," ſaid he to the Prince, as he lighted us up ſtairs, " that you ſent the meſſenger as you did; the intelligence from the Baron, which was brought to this houſe from the market-place, excited in us a dreadful anxiety for your ſafety."

" I ſent a meſſage!" ſaid the Prince.— " When? I know nothing of it."

" This evening, after eight o'clock, a perſon arrived, and ſaid, we muſt not be alarmed if you ſhould not return until late at night."

Here the Prince ſaid to me—

" You, perhaps, without my knowledge, have taken this precaution."

" I know nothing of it."

" It muſt certainly be ſo, your Highneſs," ſaid the chamberlain, " for here is your watch, which he left with me as a proof that he had been with you."

The Prince felt his pocket immediately: the watch was actually gone; and, looking upon that which the chamberlain held in his hand, he acknowledged it to be his own.

" Who

" Who brought it?" ſaid he, with eagerneſs.

" An unknown maſk in an Arminian habit, who immediately went away."

We ſtood and looked at each other in ſilent horror.

" What think you of this?" ſaid the Prince at laſt, after a long pauſe, " It is now certain that I have in Venice a ſecret inſpector."

The frightful tranſactions of this night threw the Prince into a fever, which confined him to his room for eight days. During this time our hotel was crowded with citizens and ſtrangers, who had lately learnt the rank of the Prince. They ſtrove to vie with each other in ſhewing civility to the Prince, and we ſaw with pleaſure every night how faſt ſuſpicion was wearing away. Love letters and billets came from all quarters. Every perſon endeavoured to make himſelf uſeful. The whole proceedings of the State Inquiſition were no longer thought of. In the mean time, the Court of —— did not wiſh to haſten the departure of the Prince, and therefore gave inſtructions to a rich banker in Venice to furniſh him with large ſums of money. Thus he was put into a condition, contrary to his inclination, of remaining longer in Italy; and, agreeable to his wiſhes, I conſented not to haſten my departure. As ſoon as he was ſo far recovered as to be able to leave his chamber, the phyſician ordered him to make an excurſion upon the Brenta for the benefit of the air. The weather was fine, and we ſoon made an agreeable party. Juſt as we were about to ſtep into the gondola, the Prince miſſed a key to a little

box

box which contained ſome valuable papers. We returned immediately to look for it. He remembered perfectly to have locked the box the day before, and ſince that time he had not quitted the room. But all our efforts to diſcover it were fruitleſs: we therefore abandoned the ſearch; and the Prince, whoſe ſoul was above ſuſpicion, gave it over as loſt, but requeſted me not to take any notice of it. The voyage was delightfully enchanting; the landſcape ſeemed to increaſe in beauty and variety at every turn of the river; added to this, a clear ſky, which in the middle of February formed a May-day. The charming gardens that ſurrounded the elegant country houſes which every where adorned the ſides of the Brenta, together with the majeſtic Venice crowned with an hundred towers, as if riſing from the water, offered us one of the moſt delightful proſpects in the world. We loſt ourſelves entirely in the beautiful magic of the ſcenery around us. Our ſpirits were elated, and even the Prince aſſumed an air of gaiety, and joined with us in our frolickſome pleaſantry. Sweet muſic occupied our attention, when we got to the ſhore about two Italian miles from the town. It proceeded from a ſmall village where they were holding a fair. Here every art was practiſed by the company. A troop of young maidens and children, dreſſed in a theatrical manner, welcomed us with a pantomimic dance. The invention was new: nimbleneſs and grace animated every motion. Before the dance was ended, one of them, who ſeemed to be the principal perſon, and who acted the part of the queen, ſuddenly

ſtopped,

ſtopped, as if reſtrained by an inviſible power. She ſtood ſtill, all followed her example, and the muſic ceaſed. An univerſal ſilence prevailed in the whole aſſembly, whilſt ſhe remained with her eyes fixed upon the ground as in a profound trance: then ſhe became as if inſpired, looked wild, and cried in a tranſport of joy—

"A king is amongſt us!"

She roſe, took her crown from her head, and placed it at the feet of the Prince. All who were preſent directed their eyes towards the Prince, who was a long time uncertain what could be the meaning of this juggle, ſo well had ſhe acted the monkey tricks of this farce in earneſt. At length an univerſal clapping of hands interrupted this ſilence. I looked at the Prince, and perceived that he was not a little concerned and hurt to be examined by the enquiring eyes of the company. He diſtributed money to the children, and haſtened from the crowd. We had not gone far, when a venerable monk came from the crowd, and placed himſelf in the path we were purſuing.

"Sir," ſaid the Monk, "beſtow ſome of your money upon Madona; you will need her prayers."

He ſpoke this in a tone which ſtartled us—the crowd, however, ſoon ſeparated him from us. Our ſuit was in the meantime increaſed. An Engliſh Lord, whom the Prince had ſeen before at Nizza, ſeveral merchants from Leghorn, a German prelate, a French abbé, with ſeveral ladies, and a Ruſſian officer, attached themſelves to our party. The phyſiognomy of this

this laſt, had ſomething ſo remarkable about it, that it attracted our attention. Never in my life did I ſee ſo many traits, and ſo little character; ſo much inviting benevolence, and ſuch forbidding coldneſs painted together in one man's countenance. Every paſſion ſeemed to have formerly dwelt there, and to have abandoned it. Nothing remained but the ſtill piercing look of a perfect man of the world—every eye was fixed upon him wherever he went. This ſtranger followed at a diſtance, and ſeemed indifferent to whatever was going on. We arrived at the booth where a lottery was kept: the ladies bought tickets—we followed their example, and the Prince alſo purchaſed a ſhare. He won a ſnuff-box; and, when he opened it, I perceived him turn pale, and ſtart back with the utmoſt ſurprize—the little key he had loſt was in it.

"What is this?" ſaid he to me when we were alone, with a fixed countenance, "an unknown power purſues me, an all-powerful being hovers over me; an inviſible agency, which I cannot flee from, watches over all my actions. I muſt ſeek the Arminian, and obtain an explanation from him."

The ſun was ſetting as we arrived at the pleaſure houſe where the ſupper was ſerved up. The name of the Prince had increaſed our party to the number of ſixteen perſons. Beſides our former party, a virtuoſo from Rome, ſeveral Swiſs, and an adventurer from Palermo, who wore an uniform, and gave himſelf out for a captain, initiated themſelves into our ſociety. It was agreed to ſpend the whole evening here, and to return home by torch-

torch-light. The entertainment at the table was good, and the converſation very ſprightly; the Prince could not refrain from relating the adventure of the key, which excited a general aſtoniſhment. A great diſpute aroſe concerning this affair:—The major part of the company had the temerity to think all theſe cunning tricks depended upon witchcraft. The Abbé, who had already drank a ſufficient quantity of wine, challenged the whole kingdom of ghoſts into the ring. The Engliſhman ſwore the muſician croſſed himſelf for the aſſiſtance of the Devil. A few, in the number of whom was the Prince, maintained that it was better not to give any decided opinions upon theſe ſubjects. During this converſation the Ruſſian officer entertained himſelf with the ladies, and ſeemed to be perfectly inattentive to the converſation. In the height of this diſpute, no one obſerved that the Sicilian had retired. A ſhort time afterwards he returned, clothed in a mantle, and placed himſelf behind the chair of the Frenchman.

"You have had the boldneſs," ſaid he, "to challenge all the kingdom of ghoſts.—Will you try one?"

"Yes!" ſaid the Abbé, "if you will undertake to bring one before me."

"That I will," replied the Sicilian, turning himſelf about, "when theſe ladies and gentlemen ſhall have left us."

"Why ſo!" exclaimed the Engliſhman, "a jovial ghoſt will enjoy himſelf in ſuch good company."

"I will not anſwer for the conſequences," ſaid the Sicilian.

"Oh,

" Oh, heavens !" cried the ladies, and fled, terrified, from their ſeats.

" Let your ghoſt come," ſaid the Abbé, daringly, but warn him before-hand that he will find here ſharp-pointed tools;" at the ſame time endeavouring to borrow a ſword.

" You may do, in that reſpect, as you pleaſe," ſaid the Sicilian coolly, " when you ſee it."

Here he turned himſelf towards the Prince.

" Gracious Sir," ſaid he to him, " you believe that your key was in ſtrange hands— Can you gueſs in whoſe ?"

" No."

" Do you ſuſpect any body ?"

" I had certainly a ſuſpicion."

" Should you know the perſon if you were to ſee him ?"

" Without doubt."

Here the Sicilian put aſide his mantle, and took from under it a looking-glaſs, which he held before the eyes of the Prince.

" Is this the man ?"

The Prince ſtarted back with the utmoſt terror.

" What have you ſeen ?" aſked I.

" The Arminian !"

The Sicilian put the glaſs under his mantle.

" Was that the perſon you meant ?" enquired the whole company.

" The very ſame."

Upon this every countenance was changed, no one was heard to laugh, and all eyes were fixed attentively upon the Sicilian.

" Monſieur Abbé," ſaid the Engliſhman, " this

" this thing becomes ſerious : I adviſe you to think of your retreat."

" The fellow is in league with the Devil," cried the Frenchman, and ruſhed out of the houſe. The ladies ran ſhrieking from the hall —the virtuoſo followed them—the German prelate ſnored in his chair—the Ruſſian remained ſitting as if perfectly indifferent to what was paſſing.

" You thought, perhaps, to have excited a great laugh," ſaid the Prince, " againſt this boaſter, if he had not gone out; or did you intend to have performed what you promiſed ?"

" It is true," ſaid the Sicilian, " with the Abbé I was not in earneſt; I took him at his word, becauſe I knew that the coward would not ſuffer me to go ſo far as to put it in execution."

" The thing itſelf is of too ſerious a nature to make a joke of."

" You maintain, then, that you have it in your power to do what you aſſerted ?"

The magician was ſilent, and ſeemed to be ſtudying the expreſſive countenance of the Prince.

" Yes," anſwered he at length.

The curioſity of the Prince was already excited to the higheſt degree, for he had always believed in ſupernatural beings, and this act of the Armmian brought back to his mind all his former reflections on this ſubject, which reaſon had in ſome meaſure driven away. He went aſide with the Sicilian, and I heard him converſing with him very earneſtly.

" You have before you a man," continued he, " who burns with impatience for an explanation

planation of this affair. I would eſteem that man as my benefactor, as my beſt friend, who would, in this reſpect, remove my doubts, and diſſipate the miſt from my eyes.—Will you deſerve this great ſervice at my hands?"

"What do you require of me?" ſaid the magician, with thoughtfulneſs.

"To give me immediately a proof of your art, let me ſee an apparition."

"Why ſhould I do this?"

"That you may judge, from a nearer acquaintance, whether I am worthy of higher inſtruction."

"I eſteem you above all others, mighty Prince. A ſecret power in your countenance, which you yourſelf are ignorant of, bound me at firſt ſight irreſiſtibly to you. You are more powerful than you are aware of. You have an undoubted right to command all my power, but—"

"Then allow me to ſee an apparition."

"I muſt be firſt certain that you do not make this requeſt out of curioſity; for, although the ſupernatural powers are ſubjected to my will in ſome reſpect, it is under the ſacred condition that I do not abuſe my authority."

"My motives are the pureſt. I wiſh for an explanation of facts."

Here they left their places, and approached to a diſtant window, where I could not hear what was ſaid. The Engliſhman, who had alſo heard this converſation, took me aſide.

"Your Prince has a noble mind," ſaid he, "but I pity him, for I will bet my life he has to deal with a ſharper."

"That

"That will be proved," ſaid I, "when he comes to inveſtigate this matter."

"Let me tell you," ſaid the Engliſhman, "that the Devil makes himſelf very dear. He will not practiſe his art without touching the caſh. There are nine of us. We will make a collection. This will break the neck of his ſcheme, and perhaps open the eyes of the Prince."

"I am content."

The Engliſhman immediately threw ſix guineas into a plate, and gathered in the ring. Each gave ſeveral louis. The Ruſſian eſpecially was highly pleaſed at our propoſal: he put a bank note of a hundred ſequins into the plate—a piece of extravagance which ſtartled the Engliſhman. We brought the collection to the Prince.

"Have the goodneſs," ſaid the Engliſhman, "to entreat, in our names, that gentleman to let us ſee a proof of his art, and perſuade him to accept this ſmall token of our acknowledgments for his trouble."

The Prince alſo put a coſtly ring into the plate, and preſented it to the Sicilian. He conſidered of our propoſal.

"Gentlemen," he began, "this unexpected generoſity is highly flattering. I obey your wiſhes. Your deſires ſhall be fulfilled."

In the meantime he rang the bell.

"With reſpect to this money," he continued, "to which I have no right, if you will give me leave, I will preſent it to the neareſt monaſtery, as a gratuity towards ſo benevolent an inſtitution. This ring I ſhall always keep, as a valuable proof of the goodneſs of the beſt of princes."

Here

Here the maſter of the houſe entered, to whom he immediately delivered the money.

"He is ſtill a ſwindler," ſaid the Engliſhman, "although he refuſes the gold. It is done that he may get more into the Prince's favour."

Another ſaid, "the landlord is in league with him."

"What would you wiſh to ſee?" ſaid the Sicilian to the Prince."

"Let us have a great man," ſaid the Lord: "Challenge the Pope Ganganelli; it will be the ſame to this gentleman."

The Sicilian bit his lips.

"I dare not call for one who has received extreme unction."

"That is bad," ſaid the Engliſhman. "Perhaps we ſhould learn from him of what diſorder he died."

"The Marquis of *Lanoy*," ſaid the Prince, "was a French brigadier in a former war, and my moſt intimate friend. In a battle near Haſtinbeck he received a deadly wound. They took him to my tent, where he ſoon after died in my arms. Before he expired—"Prince," ſaid he, "I ſhall never again behold my native country; I will therefore entruſt you with a ſecret, which is known to no one but myſelf. In a cloiſter upon the borders of Flanders, there lives a——" At that inſtant he expired. Death deſtroyed the thread of his diſcourſe. I could wiſh to have him brought before me, and to hear the concluſion of his tale."

"Well requeſted, by God," ſaid the Engliſhman, "I ſhall eſteem you as the greateſt conjurer in the world, if you comply with this requeſt."

We admired the wiſe choice of the Prince, and unanimouſly gave our conſent to the propoſition. In the mean time the magician walked up and down the room with haſty ſteps, and ſeemed to be holding a conference with himſelf.

" And was that all which the deceaſed communicated to you ?"

" All."

" Did you make any further enquiries, on account of what you heard, in his native country ?"

" It was in vain."

" Did the Marquis of Lanoy live irreproachably ? for I dare not call any one I pleaſe from the dead."

" He died with penitence for the ſins of his youth."

" Have you about you any token of his ?"

" Yes."

The Prince had actually a ſnuff box, on the lid of which a miniature picture of the Marquis was painted in enamel, which he uſually laid near him upon the table.

" I do not deſire to know what it is. Leave me alone : you ſhall ſee the deceaſed."

We were deſired to go into another apartment, and wait until he called for us. At the ſame time he ordered all the moveables to be taken from the hall, the windows to be taken out, and the window ſhutters to be put cloſe to. He alſo ordered the landlord, with whom he had already been conniving, to bring in a veſſel filled with hot coals, and to put out all the fires in the houſe carefully with water. Before we returned, he made us all promiſe

that

that we would obſerve a profound ſilence during the whole of what we ſhould ſee or hear. All the doors of the rooms behind us leading to this apartment were faſtened. The clock had ſtruck eleven. A deadly ſilence prevailed through the whole houſe. Before we went out, the Ruſſian ſaid to me—

"Have we any loaded piſtols with us?"

"Why?" ſaid I.

"It is at all events convenient," anſwered he. "Wait a minute, and I will go and ſee after ſome."

He went out, and the Baron and myſelf opened a window which looked towards another room, and we thought we heard people talking together, and a noiſe as if they were placing a ladder under it; but as that might only be a conjecture, I dared not give it out as certain. The Ruſſian returned with a brace of piſtols, after being abſent about half an hour. We ſaw him load them. It was now near two o'clock when the magician appeared again, and announced that he was prepared. Before we returned, he ordered us to pull off our ſhoes, and to appear in our ſhirts, ſtockings, and under garments. The doors as before were all faſtened. We found, when we returned into the hall, a large circle made with coals, in which we could all ſtand very conveniently. Round about the room, and by the four walls, the boards were taken away, ſo that we ſeemed to ſtand as it were upon an iſland. An altar, hung with black cloth, was erected in the middle of the circle, under which was ſpread a carpet of red ſilk; a Chaldean Bible laid open near a death's head upon the

the altar, and a ſilver crucifix was faſtened in the centre. Inſtead of candles, ſpirits were burning in a ſilver veſſel. A thick ſmoke of olive wood darkened the hall, which almoſt extinguiſhed the lights. The conjurer was clothed as we were, but bare-footed. On his bare neck he wore an amulet * ſuſpended by a chain of human hair. Upon his loins he wore a white mantle, which was decorated with magical characters and myſterious figures. He made us join hands, and maintain a deep ſilence. Above all, he recommended us not to aſk the apparition any queſtions. He requeſted the Engliſhman and myſelf (for he ſeemed to entertain the greateſt ſuſpicion of us) to hold two drawn ſwords, ſteadily and croſs ways, an inch above his head, as long as the ceremony ſhould laſt. We ſtood in a half circle round him. The Ruſſian officer preſſed near to the Engliſhman, and ſtood next to the altar. The magician placed himſelf upon the carpet, with his face towards the eaſt, ſprinkled holy water to the four corners of the world, and bowed thrice before the Bible. A quarter of an hour paſſed in ceremonious acts, perfectly unintelligible to us; at the end of which, he gave thoſe a ſign who ſtood behind him to hold him faſt by the hair. Struggling apparently with dreadful convulſions, he called the deceaſed by name three times;

* Amulet was the name of a charm made of wood or other materials, and on which was engraved particular words and characters, and wore about the neck, to ſubvert the machinations of the Devil and his agents. They were held in high eſteem by the Arabs, Turks, and Jews, and particularly amongſt the Catholics.

times; at the laſt, he ſtretched out his hand towards the crucifix. We inſtantly experienced a violent ſhock, which ſeparated our hands. A ſudden clap of thunder ſhook the houſe to its foundation; at the ſame time the window ſhutters rattled, and all the doors were burſt open. The apparatus fell in pieces, and as ſoon as the light was extinguiſhed, we obſerved diſtinctly on the wall over the chimney-piece the figure of a man clothed in a bloody garment, with a pale and livid aſpect.

"Who called me?" cried a faint hollow voice.

"Thy friend," ſaid the conjurer, "who venerates thy memory, and prays for thy ſoul!'

At the ſame time he mentioned the name of the Prince.

"What does he want?" continued the ghoſt, after a very long pauſe.

"He wiſhes to hear your confeſſion to the end, which you began in this world but did not finiſh.

"In a cloiſter upon the borders of Flanders there lives—"

Here the houſe ſhook again, the door opened of its own accord, and a violent clap of thunder was heard, as a flaſh of lightning illuminated the room. Immediately another form, bloody and pale like the other, appeared at the threſhold. The ſpirits in the vaſe began to burn again, and the hall was as it firſt appeared.

"Who is among us?" cried the magician, looking with horror and aſtoniſhment at the ſpectators. "I did not much wiſh for thee."

The

The ghoſt immediately walked with a ſlow and majeſtic ſtep to the altar, and ſtood upon the carpet oppoſite to us. It ſeized the crucifix, and the firſt apparition inſtantly vaniſhed.

"Who is it that has called me?" ſaid the ſecond apparition.

The magician began to tremble, Fear and aſtoniſhment almoſt overpowered us. I now ſeized a piſtol—the magician wreſted it from my hand, and fired at the ghoſt. The ball rolled along the altar, and the figure remained amidſt the ſmoke unhurt. The magician immediately ſunk down in a fit.

"What have we here?" exclaimed the Engliſhman with aſtoniſhment, as he endeavoured to ſtrike the ghoſt with his ſword. The apparition arreſted his arm, and the ſword fell to the ground. Here the ſweat of anguiſh ſtarted from my forehead, and the Baron confeſſed to us afterwards that he employed himſelf in praying. All this time the Prince ſtood fearleſs and unmoved, with his eyes rivetted upon the figure.

"Yes!" ſaid he at laſt pathetically, "I know thee: thou art Lanoy—thou art my friend. From whence doſt thou come?"

"I cannot divulge the myſteries of eternity. —Aſk me any queſtion that relates to my exiſtence on earth."

"Who lives in the cloiſter," ſaid the Prince, "of which you gave me notice at the hour of your death?"

"My daughter."

"How! Have you ever been a father?"

" I would that I had not been."

" Are you not happy, Lanoy?"

" God is my judge."

" Can I not render you any ſervice in this world?"

" None; but think of yourſelf."

" How muſt I do that?"

" You will learn it at Rome."

Immediately a clap of thunder was heard—a thick ſmoke filled the room; and when it cleared up, the figure had vaniſhed. I puſhed open a window-ſhutter—it was day-light.

The conjurer ſoon recovered his ſenſes.

" Where are we?" he cried, when he ſaw the day-light.

The Ruſſian officer ſtood cloſe behind him; and looking over his ſhoulder,

" Juggler," he ſaid, with a piercing frown, " this is the laſt time thou wilt ever have it in thy power to ſummon another ghoſt to appear on earth."

The Sicilian turned haſtily round; and, looking ſtedfaſtly in his face, uttered a loud ſhriek, and fell ſenſeleſs on the ground. Immediately the pretended Ruſſian was diſcovered by the Prince to be no other perſon than his myſterious friend the Armenian.

No language can paint the horror this circumſtance occaſioned in the mind of the Prince, and the conſternation that generally pervaded the company. We ſtood motionleſs as we ſurveyed this awful being, who penetrated us to the ſoul with his looks. A dead ſilence reigned for ſome minutes: at length ſeveral loud knocks at the door rouſed us from a

ſtate

ſtate of ſtupefaction. The noiſe continued; and the door was ſoon after ſhattered in pieces, when ſeveral police officers, with a guard, ruſhed into the hall.

"Here we find them all together," cried the commander, turning to his followers. "In the name of the government," (addreſſing himſelf to us) cried he, "I arreſt you all."

We had ſcarcely time to recollect ourſelves, ere we were all ſurrounded by the guard. The Ruſſian, whom I ſhall now call the Armenian, took the commander aſide; and notwithſtanding the confuſion we were in, I obſerved that he whiſpered ſomething in his ear, and ſhewed him a paper, at the ſight of which the man bowed reſpectfully and retired—as he paſſed us he took off his hat.

"Forgive me, gentlemen," ſaid he, "for having confounded you with this impoſtor. I will not aſk who you are, this perſon aſſures me that I have men of honour before me."

In the meantime he gave his people a hint to withdraw from us. He commanded them, however, to ſeize the Sicilian, and to bind him.

"This fellow has reigned long enough," added he, "we have been upon the watch for him theſe ſeven months."

This miſerable wretch was indeed an object of pity. The ſudden fright which the ſecond apparition occaſioned, and the unexpected reproach from the Armenian, had overpowered his ſenſes. He ſuffered himſelf to be bound without the leaſt oppoſition. His eyes rolled in his head, and a death-like paleneſs ſpread itſelf over his countenance, as at intervals he

heaved convulsive sighs. Every moment we expected that he would become frantic. The Prince pitied his distress, and undertook to solicit his discharge from the leader of the police, to whom he discovered his rank.

"Gracious Prince," said the officer, "do you know who this man is? and for whom you so generously intercede? The tricks which he practised to deceive you are the least of his crimes. We have already secured his accomplices, and they have discovered transactions which he has been concerned in of the most horrid nature. He may think himself well off if he escapes with banishment to the gallies."

In the meantime we observed the landlord and his family fettered and led through the yard.

"Is that man guilty?" cried the Prince. "What has he done?"

"He was his accomplice, said the officer, "and assisted him in his mountebank tricks and robberies, and shared the spoil with him. I will convince you immediately, gracious Sir, of the truth of my assertion" (turning towards his followers). "Search the house," he cried, "and bring me immediately intelligence as to what you discover."

The Prince looked for the Armenian, but he was gone. In the confusion which this unexpected circumstance occasioned, he found means to steal off without being observed. The Prince was inconsolable: he determined to send servants after him, and also search for him himself; and, hurrying with me to the window, we observed the whole house surrounded

rounded by the populace, whom the account of this event had drawn to the ſpot.

" It is impoſſible to make our way through the crowd," ſaid I; " and if it is the intention of the Armenian to elude our ſearch, he certainly knows the means to do it effectually: let us rather ſtay here a little longer, gracious Sir. Perhaps this officer of the police can give us ſome information reſpecting him, to whom he has, if I have rightly obſerved, diſcovered himſelf."

We recollected that we were ſtill in an undreſs, and promiſing to return ſoon, we haſtened into a room to put on our clothes as quick as poſſible. When we came back, the ſearching of the houſe was finiſhed. After they had removed the altar, and forced up the boards of the floor, they diſcovered a vault where a man was able to ſit upright, which was ſeparated by a ſecret door from a narrow ſtair-caſe that led to a gloomy cave. In this abyſs they found an electrical machine, a clock, and a ſmall ſilver bell; which laſt, as well as the electrical machine, had a communication with the altar and the crucifix that was fixed upon it. A hole had been made in the window-ſhutter oppoſite the chimney, which opened and ſhut with a ſlide. In this hole, as we learnt afterwards, was fixed a magic lanthorn, from which the figure of the ghoſt had been reflected on the oppoſite wall over the chimney. From the garret and the cave they brought ſeveral drums, to which large leaden bullets were faſtened by ſtrings: theſe had probably been uſed to imitate the roaring

of

of thunder which we had heard. In ſearching the Sicilian's clothes, they found in a caſe, different powders, genuine mercury in vials and boxes, phoſphorus in a glaſs bottle, and a ring, which we immediately knew to be magnetic, becauſe it adhered to a ſteel button that had been placed near to it by accident. In his coat pockets was a roſary, a jew's beard, a dagger, and a pocket piſtol.

"Let us ſee if it is loaded," ſaid one of the watch, and fired up the chimney.

"Jeſus Maria!" cried a voice, which we knew to be the ſame as that we had heard when the firſt ſpirit appeared, and at the ſame inſtant we beheld a bleeding perſon tumbling down the chimney.

"What! not yet at reſt, poor ghoſt?" cried the Engliſhman, whilſt we ſtarted back affrighted. "Go to thy grave. Thou haſt appeared what thou waſt not, and now thou wilt be what thou haſt appeared."

"Jeſus Maria! I am wounded!" replied the man.

The ball had fractured his right leg. Care was immediately taken to have the wound dreſſed.

"But who art thou?" ſaid the Engliſh lord, "and what evil ſpirit brought thee here?"

"I am a poor ſolitary monk," anſwered the wounded man. "A ſtrange gentleman offered me a zechin to—"

"Repeat your magical leſſon.—And why didſt thou not withdraw immediately when you had finiſhed?"

I was

" I was waiting for a ſignal to continue my ſpeech, as had been agreed on between us; but as this ſignal was not given, I was endeavouring to get off, when I found the ladder had been removed."

" And what was the formula he taught thee ?"

The wounded man fainted: nothing more could be got from him. When we obſerved his features more minutely, we diſcovered him to be the ſame man that ſtood in the path-way of the Prince the evening before, and aſked alms for the Madona. The Prince addreſſed the leader of the watch, giving him at the ſame time ſome pieces of gold.

" You have reſcued us," ſaid he, " from the hands of a deceiver, and done us juſtice even without knowing us—increaſe our gratitude by telling us who the ſtranger was, that, by ſpeaking only a few words, procured us our liberty ?"

" Whom do you mean ?" aſked the officer, with a countenance which ſeemed to indicate that the queſtion was uſeleſs.

" The gentleman in a Ruſſian uniform, who took you aſide, ſhewed you a written paper, and whiſpered in your ear, in conſequence of which you immediately ſet us free."

" Do not you know the gentleman ?" ſaid the officer. " Was he not one of your company ?"

" No," ſaid the Prince; " and I have very important reaſons for wiſhing to be acquainted with him."

" He is a perfect ſtranger to me too," replied

plied the officer; "even his name is unknown to me. I saw him to-day for the first time in my life."

"How! And was he able in so short a space of time, and by using only a few words, to convince you that we were all innocent?"

"Undoubtedly, Sire, with a single word."

"And this was?—I confess I wish to know it."

"This stranger, my Prince," (weighing the zechins in his hand)—"You have been too generous for me to make it any longer a mystery—This stranger is an officer of the Inquisition."

"Of the Inquisition!—What! that man?"

"Nothing else, my Prince. I was convinced of it by the paper which he shewed to me."

"That man did you say? It cannot be."

"I will tell you more, my Prince; it was upon his information that I have been sent here to arrest the conjurer."

We looked at each other with the utmost astonishment.

"Now we know," said the English Lord, "why the poor devil of a sorcerer started when he came near his face. He knew him to be a spy, and for that reason he made such a horrible outcry and threw himself at his feet."

"No!" interrupted the Prince. "This man is whatever he wishes to be, and whatever the moment requires him to be. No mortal ever knew what he really was. Did not you see the knees of the Sicilian sink under him, when he said, with a terrible voice:

"Thou

" Thou ſhalt no more call a ghoſt." There is ſomething myſterious in this matter. No perſon can perſuade me that one man ſhould be thus alarmed at the ſight of another, without ſome moſt eſſential reaſon."

" The Conjurer will probably explain it the beſt," ſaid the Engliſh Lord, " if that gentleman (pointing to the officer) will procure us an opportunity of ſpeaking to his priſoner."

The officer conſented to it, and after having agreed with the Engliſhman to viſit the Sicilian in the morning, we returned to Venice*.

Lord Seymour (this was the name of the Engliſhman) called upon us very early in the forenoon, and was ſoon after followed by a perſon whom the officer had intruſted with the care of conducting us to the priſon. I forgot to mention that one of the Prince's domeſtics, a native of Bremen, and who had ſerved him many years with the ſtricteſt fidelity, and who poſſeſſed his confidence, had been miſſing for ſeveral days. Whether he had met with any accident; been kidnapped, or had voluntarily abſented himſelf, was a ſecret to every one. The laſt ſuppoſition was

* Count O——, whoſe narrative I have thus far literally copied, deſcribes minutely the various effects of this adventure upon the mind of the Prince, and of his companions, and recounts a variety of tales of apparitions, which this event gave occaſion to introduce. I ſhall omit giving them to the reader, on the ſuppoſition that he is as curious as myſelf to know the concluſion of the adventure, and its effects on the conduct of the Prince. I ſhall only add, that the Prince got no ſleep the remainder of the night, and that he waited with impatience for the moment which was to diſcloſe this incomprehenſible myſtery.

extremely improbable, as his conduct had always been regular and irreproachable. All that his companions could recollect, was, that he had been for ſometime very melancholy, and that, whenever he had a moment's leiſure, he uſed to viſit a certain monaſtery in the *Giudecca*, where he had formed an acquaintance with ſome monks. This led us to ſuppoſe that he might have fallen into the hands of the prieſts, and had been perſuaded to turn Catholic. The Prince was indifferent about matters of this kind, and the few enquiries he cauſed to be made proving unſucceſsful, he gave up the ſearch. He, however, regretted the loſs of this man, who had ſo conſtantly attended him in his campaigns, had always been faithfully attached to him, and whom it was therefore difficult to replace in a foreign country. The very ſame day the Prince's banker, whom he had commiſſioned to provide him with another ſervant, came at the moment we were going out; he preſented to the Prince a well-dreſſed man, of a good appearance, about forty years of age, who had been for a long time ſecretary to a procurator; ſpoke French and a little German, and was beſides furniſhed with the beſt recommendations. The Prince was pleaſed with the man's phyſiognomy; and as he declared that he would be ſatisfied with ſuch wages as his ſervice ſhould be found to merit, the Prince engaged him immediately. We found the Sicilian in a private priſon, where, as the keeper aſſured us, he had been lodged for the preſent, to accommodate the Prince, as he was to be con-

fined

fined in future under the lead roofs, to which there is no acceſs. Theſe lead roofs are the moſt terrible dungeons in Venice. They are ſituated on the top of the Palace of St. Mark, and the miſerable criminals ſuffer ſo exceſſively from the heat of the leads, occaſioned by the burning rays of the ſun deſcending directly upon them, that they frequently become diſtracted. The Sicilian had recovered from his terror, and roſe reſpectfully at the ſight of the Prince. He had fetters on one hand and one leg, but he was able to walk about the room. The keeper left the dungeon as ſoon as we had entered.

"I come," ſaid the Prince, "to requeſt an explanation of you on two ſubjects.—You owe me the one, and it ſhall not be to your diſadvantage if you grant me the other."

"My part is now acted," replied the Sicilian. "My deſtiny is in your hands."

"Your ſincerity alone can mitigate your puniſhment."

"Aſk, my Prince, I am ready to anſwer you. I have nothing more to loſe."

"You ſhewed me the face of the Armenian in your looking-glaſs.—How was it done?"

"What you ſaw was no looking-glaſs—a portrait in paſtel behind a glaſs, repreſenting a man in an Armenian dreſs, deceived you The want of light, your aſtoniſhment, and my own dexterity, favoured the deception. The picture itſelf muſt have been found among the other things ſeized at the inn."

"But how came you ſo well acquainted with my ideas as to hit upon the Armenian?"

"This

" This was not difficult, my Prince. You have perhaps frequently mentioned your adventure with the Armenian at table, in preſence of your domeſtics. One of my ſervants got accidentally acquainted with one of yours in the Giudecca, and ſoon learned from him as much as I wiſhed to know."

" Where is this man?" aſked the Prince; " I miſs him, and in all probability you are acquainted with the place of his retreat, and the reaſon why he deſerted my ſervice."

" I ſwear to you, gracious Sir, that I know not the leaſt of him. I have never ſeen him myſelf, nor had any other concern with him than the one before-mentioned."

" Go on," ſaid the Prince.

" By this means alſo, I received the firſt information of your reſidence, and of your adventures at Venice; and I reſolved immediately to profit by them. Your Highneſs ſees that I am ingenuous. I was apprized of your intended excurſion on the Brenta—I was prepared for it: and a key, that dropped by chance from your pocket, afforded me the firſt opportunity of trying my art upon you."

" How! Have I been miſtaken? The adventure of the key then was a trick of yours, and not of the Armenian?—You ſay this key fell from my pocket?"

" You accidentally dropped it in taking out your purſe, and I inſtantly covered it with my foot. The perſon of whom you bought the lottery ticket was in concert with me. He cauſed you to draw it from a box where there was no blank, and the key had been in the

ſnuff

ſnuff box long before it came into your poſſeſſion."

"It is almoſt incomprehenſible—And the monk who ſtopped me in my way, and addreſſed me in a manner ſo ſolemn—"

"Was the ſame that I hear has been wounded in the chimney. He is one of my accomplices, and under that diſguiſe has rendered me many important ſervices."

"But what purpoſe was this intended to anſwer?"

"To render you thoughtful: to inſpire you with ſuch a train of ideas as ſhould be favourable to the wonders I intended to make you believe."

"The pantomimical dance, which ended in a manner ſo extraordinary, was at leaſt none of your contrivance."

"I had taught the girl who repreſented the queen. Her performance was the reſult of my inſtructions. I ſuppoſed your Highneſs would not be a little aſtoniſhed to find yourſelf known in this place and (I entreat your Highneſs's pardon) your adventure with the Armenian gave room for me to hope that you were already diſpoſed to reject natural interpretations, and to ſearch for the marvellous."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Prince, at once angry and amazed, and caſting upon me a ſignificant look—"Indeed, I did not expect this*. But," continued he, after a long ſilence

* Nor in all probability did my readers. The circumſtance of the crown depoſited at the feet of the Prince, in a manner ſo unexpected and extraordinary, and the former predictions

lence, "how did you produce the figure that appeared on the wall over the chimney?"

"By means of a magic lantern that was fixed in the oppoſite window-ſhutter, in which you have, no doubt, obſerved an opening."

"And how did it happen that none of us perceived the lantern?" aſked Lord Seymour.

"You remember, my Lord, that on your re-entering the room, it was darkened by a thick ſmoke of olive wood. I uſed likewiſe the precaution to place upright againſt the wall near the window, the boards which had been taken up from the floor. By theſe means I prevented the ſhutter from coming immediately under your ſight. Moreover, the lantern remained covered until you had taken your places, and until there was no further reaſon to apprehend any examination from the perſons in the hall."

"As I looked out of the window in the other pavilion," ſaid I, "I heard a noiſe like that of a perſon who was in the act of placing a ladder againſt the ſide of the houſe. Was it really ſo?"

"Yes, my aſſiſtant ſtood upon this ladder to direct the magic-lantern."

"The

predictions of the Arminian ſeemed ſo naturally and ſo obviouſly to aim at the ſame object, that at the firſt reading of theſe memoirs, I immediately remembered the deceitful ſpeech of the Witches in the play of Macbeth:

"All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!

"All hail, Macbeth! that ſhalt be king hereafter!"

When a particular idea has once entered the mind, it neceſſarily connects with itſelf every ſubſequent idea that ſeems to have the leaſt affinity to it.

" The apparition," continued the Prince, " had really a ſuperficial likeneſs to my deceaſed friend; and what was particularly ſtriking, his hair, which was of a very light colour, was exactly imitated. Was this mere chance, or how did you come by ſuch a reſemblance?"

" Your Highneſs muſt recollect, that you had at table a ſnuff-box laid by your plate, with an enamelled portrait of an officer in a French uniform. I aſked whether you had any thing about you as a memorial of your friend. Your Highneſs anſwered in the affirmative. I conjectured it might be the box. I had attentively conſidered the picture during ſupper, and being very expert in drawing, and not leſs happy in taking likeneſſes, I had no difficulty in giving to my ſhade the ſuperficial reſemblance you have perceived, becauſe the Marquis's features are very ſtriking."

" But the figure ſeemed to move?"

" It appeared ſo, yet it was not the figure, but the ſmoke which received its light."

" And the man who fell down in the chimney ſpoke for the apparition?"

" He did."

" But he could not hear your queſtions diſtinctly."

" There was no occaſion for it. Your Highneſs will recollect, that I ordered you all very ſtrictly not to propoſe any queſtion yourſelves to the apparition. My enquiries and his anſwers were pre-concerted between us; and that no miſtake might happen, I cauſed him

to

to ſpeak at long intervals, which he counted by the beating of a watch."

"You ordered the innkeeper carefully to extinguiſh every fire in the houſe. This was, undoubtedly—"

"To ſave the man from the danger of being ſmothered; becauſe the chimnies in the houſe communicate with each other, and I did not think myſelf very ſecure from your retinue."

"How did it happen," aſked Lord Seymour, "that your ghoſt appeared neither ſooner nor later than you wiſhed him?"

"The ghoſt was in the room for ſome time before I called him; but while the room was lighted, the ſhade was too feint to be perceived. When the formula of the conjuration was finiſhed, I cauſed the cover of the box, in which the ſpirit was burning, to drop down; the hall was darkened, and it was not till then that the figure on the wall could be diſtinctly ſeen, although it had been reflected there a conſiderable time before."

"When the ghoſt appeared, we all felt an electrical ſtroke. How was that managed?"

"You have diſcovered the machine under the altar. You have alſo ſeen, that I was ſtanding upon a ſilk carpet. I ordered you to form a half moon around me, and to take hold of each other's hand. When the criſis approached, I gave a ſign to one of you to ſeize me by the hair. The ſilver crucifix was the conductor, and you felt the electrical ſhock when I touched it with my hand."

You

You ordered Count O . . . and myſelf," continued Lord Seymour, " to hold two naked ſwords acroſs over your head, during the whole time of the conjuration; for what purpoſe?"

" For no other than to engage your attention during the operation; becauſe I diſtruſted you two the moſt. You remember, that I expreſsly commanded you to hold the ſwords one inch above my head; by confining you exactly to this diſtance, I prevented you from looking where I did not wiſh you. I had not then perceived my principal enemy."

" I own," ſaid Lord Seymour, " you acted cautiouſly; but why were we obliged to appear undreſſed?"

" Merely to give a greater ſolemnity to the ſcene, and to fill your imaginations with the idea of ſomething extraordinary."

" The ſecond apparition prevented your ghoſt from ſpeaking," ſaid the Prince; " what ſhould we have learnt from him?"

" Nearly the ſame as what you heard afterwards. It was not without deſign that I aſked your Highneſs whether you had told me every thing that the deceaſed communicated to you, and whether you had made any further enquiries on this ſubject in his country? I thought this was neceſſary, in order to prevent the depoſition of the ghoſt from being contradicted by facts that you were previouſly acquainted with. Knowing likewiſe that every man, eſpecially in his youth, is liable to error, enquired whether the life of your friend had been

been irreproachable, and on your anſwer I founded that of the ghoſt."

"Your explanation of this matter is in ſome meaſure ſatisfactory; but there remains yet one material circumſtance which I muſt inſiſt upon being cleared up."

"If it be in my power, and—"

"I ſhall not liſten to any conditions. Juſtice, into whoſe hands you are fallen, ought not, perhaps, to deal with you ſo delicately. Who was the man at whoſe feet we ſaw you fall? What do you know of him? How did you get acquainted with him? and what do you know of the ſecond apparition?

"Your Highneſs....."

"Heſitate not a moment. Recollect, that on looking at the Ruſſian officer attentively, you ſcreamed aloud, and fell on your knees before him. What are we to underſtand by that?"

"That man, my Prince....." He ſtopped, grew viſibly pale and perplexed, and, looking around him with an awful trepidation —"Yes, your Highneſs," he continued, "that man is a terrible being."

"What do you know of him? What connection have you with him? Do not conceal the truth from us."

"I will not; but—I am not certain that he is not among us at this very moment?"

"Where? Who!" exclaimed we all together, looking fearfully about the room. "It is impoſſible."

"That

"That man, or whatever elſe he may be, is a being incomprehenſible; all things ſeem poſſible for him to do."

"Who is he? Whence does he come? Is he Armenian or Ruſſian? Of the characters he aſſumes, which is his real one."

"He is not what he appears to be. There are few conditions or countries in which he has not worn the maſk. No perſon knows who he is, whence he comes, or whither he goes. Some ſay he has been for a long time in Egypt, and that he has brought from thence, out of a catacomb, his occult ſciences. Here we only know him by the name of the Incomprehenſible. How old, for inſtance, do you think he is?"

"To judge from his appearance, he can ſcarcely have paſſed forty."

"And of what age do you ſuppoſe I am?"

"Not far from fifty."

"Well, and I muſt tell you, that I was but a boy of ſeventeen, when my grandfather ſpoke to me of this extraordinary man, whom he had ſeen at Famaguſta; at which time he appeared nearly of the ſame age as he does at preſent."

"Impoſſible," ſaid the Prince; "it is ridiculous, and incredible."

"By no means, Sir. Were I not prevented by theſe fetters, I could produce vouchers that would readily confirm my aſſertion. There are ſeveral credible perſons who remember having ſeen him, each at the ſame time, in different parts of the globe. No ſword can wound—no poiſon hurt—no fire burn him—

no

no veſſel in which he embarks can be ſhipwrecked or ſunk; time itſelf ſeems to have no influence over him; years do not affect his conſtitution, nor age whiten his hair. He was never ſeen to take any food. Never did he approach a woman. No ſleep cloſes his eyes. Of the twenty-four hours in the day, there is only one which he cannot command, during which no perſon ever ſaw him, and during which he never was employed in any terreſtrial occupation."

"And this hour is—"

"That of midnight. When the clock ſtrikes twelve, he ceaſes to belong to the living. In whatever place he is, he muſt immediately be gone; whatever buſineſs he is engaged in, he muſt inſtantly leave it. That dreadful hour tears him from the arms of friendſhip, hurries him from the ſacred altar, and would, even in the agonies of death, drag him from his bed. His haunt has never been diſcovered, nor his engagements at that hour known. No perſon ventures to interrogate, and ſtill leſs to follow him. As the hour approaches, his features are enveloped in the gloom of melancholy, and ſo terrifying that no perſon has courage to look him in the face or to ſpeak a word to him. However lively the converſation may have been, a dead ſilence immediately ſucceeds it, and all around him wait for his return in awful horror, without venturing to quit their ſeats, or to open the door through which he has paſſed."

"Does nothing extraordinary appear in his perſon when he returns?"

"Nothing,

" Nothing, except that he ſeems pale and languid, nearly in the ſtate of a man who has juſt ſuffered a painful operation, or received diſaſtrous intelligence. Some pretend to have ſeen drops of blood on his linen, but with what degree of veracity I cannot affirm."

" Did no perſon ever attempt to conceal the approach of this hour from him, or endeavour to engage him in ſuch diverſions as might make him forget it ?"

" Once only, it is ſaid, he paſſed the fatal hour. The company was numerous, and remained together till late at night. All the clocks and watches were purpoſely ſet wrong, and the warmth of converſation diverted his attention. When the moment arrived, he ſuddenly became ſilent and motionleſs ; his limbs continued in the poſition in which this inſtant had arreſted them ; his eyes were fixed, his pulſe ceaſed to beat ; all the means employed to awake him proved fruitleſs, and this ſituation endured till the hour had elapſed ; he then revived on a ſudden, and continued his ſpeech from the ſame ſyllable that he was pronouncing at the moment of interruption. The general conſternation diſcovered to him what had happened ; and he declared, with an awful ſolemnity, that they ought to think themſelves happy in having eſcaped with no other injury than fear. The ſame night he quitted for ever the place where this circumſtance had occurred. The common opinion is, that during this myſterious hour he converſes with his attendant ſpirits. Some even ſuppoſe him to be one of the departed, who is allowed to

paſs

paſs twenty-three hours of the day among the living, and that in the twenty-fourth his ſoul is obliged to return to the infernal regions to ſuffer its puniſhment. Some believe him to be the famous Apollonius of Tyana *, and others the diſciple of St. John the Baptiſt, of whom it is ſaid that he ſhall remain wandering on the earth until the day of judgment."

"A character ſo wonderful," replied the Prince, "cannot fail to give riſe to extraordinary conjectures. But all this you profeſs to

* Apollonius, a Pythagorean philoſopher, was born at Tyana, in Capadocia, about three or four years before the birth of Chriſt. At ſixteen years of age he became a ſtrict obſerver of Pythagorean rules, renouncing wine, women, and all ſorts of fleſh; not wearing ſhoes, letting his hair grow, and clothing himſelf with nothing but linen. He ſoon after ſet up for a reformer of mankind, and choſe his habitation in the temple of Eſculapius, where he is ſaid to have performed many miraculous cures. On his coming of age, he gave part of his wealth to his eldeſt brother, diſtributed another part to ſome poor relations, and kept very little for himſelf. There are numberleſs fabulous ſtories recounted of him. He went five years without ſpeaking, and yet, during this time, he ſtopped many ſeditions in Cicilia and Pamphylia. He travelled, ſet up for a legiſlator, and gave out that he underſtood all languages without having ever learned them. He could tell the thoughts of men, and underſtood the oracles which birds delivered by their ſinging. The Heathens oppoſed the pretended miracles of this man to thoſe of our Saviour, and gave the preference to this philoſopher. After having for a long time impoſed upon the world, and gained a great number of diſciples, he died in a very advanced age about the end of the firſt century. His life, which is filled with abſurdities, was written by Philoſtratus, and M. du Pin has publiſhed a confutation of Apollonius's life, in which he proves, that the miracles of this pretended philoſopher carry ſtrong marks of falſehood, and that there is not one which may not be aſcribed to chance or artifice. Apollonius himſelf wrote ſome works, which are now loſt.

to know only by hearſay; and yet this behaviour to you, and yours to him, ſeemed to indicate a more intimate acquaintance. Is it not founded upon ſome particular event, in which yourſelf have been concerned? Conceal nothing from us."

The Sicilian remained ſilent, as if uncertain whether he ſhould ſpeak or not.

"If it concern any thing," ſaid the Prince, "that you do not wiſh to publiſh, I promiſe you by my honour, and before theſe gentlemen, the moſt inviolable ſecreſy; but ſpeak openly, and without reſerve."

"Could I hope," anſwered the priſoner at laſt, "that you would not produce theſe gentlemen as evidence againſt me, I would tell you a remarkable adventure of this Armenian, to which I myſelf was witneſs, and which will leave you no doubt of his ſupernatural powers. But I beg leave to conceal ſome names."

"Cannot you do it without this condition?"

"No, your Highneſs: there is a family concerned in it which I muſt reſpect."

"Let us hear then?"

"Above five years ago, being at Naples, where I practiſed my art with ſucceſs, I became acquainted with a perſon of the name of Lorenzo del M.... chevalier of the order of St. Stephen, a young and rich nobleman of one of the firſt families in the kingdom, who loaded me with civilities, and ſeemed to have a great eſteem for my occult ſcience. He told me, that the Marquis del M.... his father,

was

was a zealous admirer of the cabbala †, and would think himſelf happy in having a philoſopher like me (for ſuch he was pleaſed to call me) under his roof. The Marquis reſided in one of his country ſeats on the ſea ſhore, about ſeven miles from Naples; and there, almoſt entirely ſecluded from the world, he mourned the loſs of a beloved ſon, of whom he had been deprived by a fatal and melancholy accident. The Chevalier gave me to underſtand, that he and his family might perhaps have occaſion to employ my ſecret arts in obtaining ſome very important intelligence, to procure which every natural means had been exhauſted in vain. He added, with a very ſignificant look, that he himſelf might perhaps at ſome future period conſider me as the author of all his earthly happineſs. I did not chooſe to preſs him for an explanation. The affair was as follows: "Lorenzo, being the youngeſt

† Cabbala is properly a myſterious kind of ſcience delivered by revelation to the ancient Jews, and tranſmitted by oral tradition to thoſe of our times; ſerving for the interpretation of difficult paſſages in ſcripture, and to diſcover future events by the combination of particular words, letters, and numbers. It is likewiſe termed the oral law. But Cabbala, among the Chriſtians, is alſo applied to the uſe, or rather abuſe, which viſionaries and enthuſiaſtiſts make of ſcripture for diſcovering futurity, by the ſtudy and conſideration of the combination of certain words, letters, and numbers in the ſacred writings. All the words, terms, magic characters, or figures, with ſtones and taliſmans, numbers, letters, charms, &c. in magic operations, are compriſed under this ſpecies of Cabbala, and the word is uſed for any kind of magic, on account of the reſemblance this art bears to the Jewiſh Cabbala. The Jews, however, never uſe the word in any ſuch ſenſe, but always with the utmoſt reſpect and veneration.

eſt ſon of the Marquis, had been deſtined for the church. The family eſtates were to devolve to the eldeſt. Jeronymo, which was the name of the latter, had ſpent many years on his travels, and returned to his country about ſeven years prior to the event which I am about to relate, in order to celebrate his marriage with the only daughter of a neighbouring count. This marriage had been determined on by the parents during the infancy of the children, in order to unite the very large fortunes of the two houſes. But though this agreement was made by the two families without conſulting the hearts of the parties concerned, the latter had ſecretly entertained an affection for each other. Jeronymo del M.... and Antonia C... had been always brought up together, and the little conſtraint impoſed on two children, whom their parents were already accuſtomed to regard as united, ſoon produced between them a connection of the tendereſt kind. The congeniality of their tempers cemented this intimacy, and in riper years it matured inſenſibly into love. An abſence of four years, far from cooling this paſſion, had only ſerved to inflame it, and Jeronymo returned to the arms of his intended bride as faithful and as ardent as if they had never been ſeparated. The raptures occaſioned by his return had not ſubſided, nor the preparations for the happy day diſcontinued, when Jeronymo diſappeared. He uſed frequently to paſs the afternoon in a ſummer-houſe which commanded a proſpect of the ſea, and was accuſtomed to take the diverſion

of ſailing on the water. One day, when he was at his favourite retirement, it was obſerved that he remained a much longer time than uſual without returning, and his friends began to be very uneaſy on his account. Boats were diſpatched after him, veſſels were ſent to ſea in queſt of him—no perſon had ſeen him—none of his ſervants could have attended him, for none of them were abſent—night came on, and he did not appear. The next morning dawned—the day paſſed—the evening ſucceeded—Jeronymo came not. Already had they begun to give themſelves up to the moſt melancholy conjectures, when the news arrived that an Algerine pirate had landed the preceding day on that coaſt, and carried off ſeveral of the inhabitants. Two galleys, ready equipped, were immediately ordered to ſea. The old Marquis himſelf embarked in one of them, to attempt the deliverance of his ſon at the peril of his own life. On the third day they perceived the corſair. The wind was favourable—they were juſt about to overtake him, and even approached ſo near to him, that Lorenzo, who was in one of the gallies, fancied that he ſaw, upon the deck of the adverſary's ſhip, a ſignal made by his brother, when a ſudden ſtorm ſeparated the veſſels. Hardly could the almoſt ſhipwrecked galleys ſuſtain the fury of the tempeſt. The pirate, in the meantime had diſappeared, and the diſtreſſed ſtate of the other veſſels obliged them to put into Malta. The affliction of the family was beyond all bounds. The diſtracted old Marquis tore his grey hairs in the utmoſt violence

of

of grief, and the life of the young Counteſs was deſpaired of. Five years were conſumed after this event in fruitleſs enquiries; diligent ſearch was made all along the coaſt of Barbary; and immenſe ſums were offered for the ranſom of the young Marquis, but to no purpoſe. The only conjecture which could be founded on probability was, that the ſame ſtorm which had ſeparated the galleys from the pirate had deſtroyed the latter veſſel, and that the whole ſhip's company had periſhed in the waves. But this ſuppoſition, however probable, as it did not by any means amount to a certainty, could not authorize the family to renounce the hope that the abſent Jeronymo might again appear. In caſe however that he did not, either the family's name muſt be ſuffered to periſh, or the youngeſt ſon muſt relinquiſh the church, and enter into the rights of the eldeſt. Juſtice ſeemed to oppoſe the latter meaſure; and on the other hand, the neceſſity of preſerving the family from annihilation required that the ſcruple ſhould not be carried too far. In the meantime, ſorrow, added to the weight of age, was bringing the Marquis faſt to his grave. Every unſucceſsful attempt ſerved to increaſe his diſtreſs, and diminiſh the hope of finding his loſt ſon. He ſaw that his name might be perpetuated by acting with a little injuſtice, in conſenting to favour his younger ſon at the expence of the elder. The fulfilment of his agreement with Count C. . . . required only the change of a name; for the object of the two families was equally accompliſhed, whether Antonia be-

came the wife of Lorenzo or Jeronymo. The faint probability of the latter's appearing again weighed but little againſt the certain and preſsing danger of the total extinction of the family; and the old Marquis, who conſidered his diſſolution faſt approaching, ardently wiſhed to die free from this inquietude. Lorenzo alone, who was to be principally benefited by this meaſure, oppoſed it with the greateſt obſtinacy. He reſiſted with equal firmneſs the allurements of an immenſe fortune, and the attractions of a beautiful and accompliſhed object ready to be delivered into his arms. He refuſed on principles the moſt generous and conſcientious, to invade the rights of a brother, who for any thing he knew might himſelf be in a capacity to reſume them.

"Is not the lot of my Jeronymo," ſaid he, "made ſufficiently miſerable by the horrors of a long captivity, without the aggravation of being deprived for ever of all that he holds moſt dear? With what conſcience could I ſupplicate Heaven for his return, when his wife is in my arms? With what countenance could I meet him, if at laſt he ſhould be reſtored to us by a miracle? And even ſuppoſing that he is torn from us for ever, can we honour his memory better than by keeping conſtantly open the chaſm which his death has cauſed in our circle? Can we better ſhew our reſpects to him than by ſacrificing our deareſt hopes upon his tomb, and keeping untouched as a ſacred depoſit, what was peculiarly his own."

But

But theſe arguments of fraternal delicacy could not reconcile the old Marquis to the idea of being obliged to witneſs the decay of a tree which nine centuries had beheld flouriſhing. All that Lorenzo could obtain was a delay of two years. During this period they continued their enquiries with the utmoſt diligence. Lorenzo himſelf made ſeveral voyages, and expoſed his perſon to many dangers. No trouble, no expence, was ſpared to recover the loſt Jeronymo. Theſe two years, however, like thoſe which preceded them, were conſumed in vain.

"And Antonia," ſaid the Prince. "You tell us nothing of her. Could ſhe ſo calmly ſubmit to her fate? I cannot ſuppoſe it."

"Antonia," anſwered the Sicilian, "experienced the moſt violent ſtruggle between duty and inclination, between diſlike and admiration. The diſintereſted generoſity of a brother affected her. She felt herſelf forced to eſteem a perſon whom ſhe could never love. Her heart, torn by contrary ſentiments, felt the bittereſt diſtreſs; but her repugnance to the Chevalier ſeemed to increaſe in the ſame degree as his claims upon her eſteem augmented. Lorenzo perceived with heartfelt ſorrow the ſecret grief that conſumed her youth. An unconquerable ſympathy for her misfortune inſenſibly eradicated that indifference with which till then we had been accuſtomed to conſider her. But this deluſive ſentiment deceived him, and an ungovernable paſſion began rapidly to ſhake the ſteadineſs of his virtue, which till then had been unequalled. He, however,

however, ſtill obeyed the dictates of generoſity, though at the expence of his love. By his efforts alone was the unfortunate victim protected againſt the cruel and arbitrary proceedings of the reſt of the family. But his endeavours were ineffectual. Every victory he gained over his paſſion rendered him more worthy of Antonia, and the diſintereſtedneſs with which he refuſed her, left her without an apology for reſiſtance. Thus were affairs ſituated, when the Chevalier engaged me to viſit him at his father's villa. The earneſt recommendation of my patron procured me a reception which exceeded my moſt ſanguine wiſhes. I muſt not forget to mention, that by ſome remarkable operations I had previouſly rendered my name famous in different lodges of freemaſons. This circumſtance perhaps contributed to ſtrengthen the old Marquis's confidence in me, and to heighten his expectations. I beg you will excuſe me from deſcribing particularly the lengths I went with him, or the means which I employed. You may form ſome judgment of them from what I have before confeſſed to you. Profiting by the myſtic books which I found in his very extenſive library, I was ſoon able to ſpeak to him in his own language, and to adorn my ſyſtem of the inviſible world with the moſt extraordinary inventions. He was therefore with ſo little difficulty induced to credit the fables I taught him, that in a ſhort time he would have believed as implicitly in the ſecret commerce of philoſophers and ſylphs as in any article of the canon. The Marquis, being very religious,

had

had acquired in the ſchool of theology a facility of belief, which cauſed him at once to be faſcinated with the ſtories I told him, and to put the moſt unreſerved confidence in my character. At length I entangled him ſo completely in myſtery, that he would no longer believe any thing that was natural. In ſhort, I became the adored apoſtle of the houſe. The uſual ſubject of my lectures was the exaltation of human nature, and the intercourſe of men with ſuperior things; the infallible Count Gabolis † was my oracle. Antonia, whoſe mind ſince the loſs of her lover had been more occupied in the world of ſpirits, than in that of nature, and who had a ſtrong tincture of melancholy in her compoſition, caught every hint I gave her with a fearful ſatisfaction. Even the ſervants contrived to have ſome buſineſs in the room when I was ſpeaking, and, ſeizing part of my converſation, formed from it myſterious preſages.—Two months were paſſed in this manner at the Marquis's villa, when the Chevalier one morning entered my apartment —His features had experienced a conſiderable alteration, and from his ſorrowful countenance I ſuſpected that ſomething preyed upon his mind.—He threw himſelf upon a couch with every ſymptom of deſpair.

"I am diſtracted, ruined," ſaid he; "I muſt, I cannot ſupport it any longer."

"What is the matter with you, Chevalier? What has befallen you?"

"Oh!

† A myſtical work written in French by the Abbe de Villars.

"Oh! this terrible paſſion!" ſaid he, ſtarting from his ſeat, and throwing himſelf into my arms. "I have combated againſt it like a man, but can reſiſt it no longer."

"And whoſe fault is it but your own, my dear Chevalier? Are they not all willing to gratify this paſſion? Your father! Your relations!"

"My father! my relations! What are they to me? I want not to be united to her by force—Have not I a rival? Alas! and what a rival! Perhaps a dead one! Oh! let me go, let me go to the end of the world; I muſt find my brother."

"What! after ſo many unſucceſsful attempts, have you ſtill any hope?"

"Hope! Alas, no. It has long ſince been baniſhed from my heart, but it has not from her's; of what conſequence are my ſentiments? Is it poſſible that I ſhould be happy whilſt there remains a gleam of hope in Antonia's breaſt? Two words, my friend, would end my torments, but in vain; my deſtiny muſt continue to be miſerable, till eternity ſhall break its long ſilence, and the grave ſhall ſpeak in my behalf."

"Is it then a ſtate of certainty that would render you happy?"

"Happy! Alas! I doubt whether I ſhall ever be happy again; but uncertainty is of all others the moſt dreadful affliction."

After a ſhort interval of ſilence, he continued with an emotion leſs violent:

"If he could ſee my torments! Surely a conſtancy which renders his brother miſerable cannot

cannot add to his happineſs! Can it be juſt, that the living ſhould ſuffer ſo much for the ſake of the dead; that I ſhould fruitleſsly pine for an object which Jeronymo can no longer enjoy? If he knew the pangs I ſuffer, (ſaid he, concealing his face while the tears ſtreamed from his eyes) perhaps he himſelf would conduct her to my arms."

"But is there no poſſibility of gratifying your wiſhes?"

"He ſtarted! What do you ſay, my friend?"

"Leſs important occaſions than the preſent," ſaid I, "have diſturbed the repoſe of the dead for the ſake of the living; is not the terreſtrial happineſs of a man, of a brother—"

"The terreſtrial happineſs! Ah, my friend, I feel but too ſenſibly the force of your expreſſion—my entire felicity!"

"And the tranquillity of a diſtreſſed family, are not theſe ſufficient to juſtify ſuch a meaſure? Undoubtedly, if any ſublunary concern can authorize us to interrupt the peace of the bleſſed, to make uſe of a power—"

"For God's ſake, my friend!" ſaid he, interrupting me, "no more of this—once, I avow it, I had ſuch a thought; I think I mentioned it to you; but I have long ſince rejected it as horrid and abominable."

"You will have conjectured already," continued the Sicilian, "to what this converſation led us; I endeavoured to overcome the ſcruples of the Chevalier, and at laſt ſucceeded.—We reſolved to call the ghoſt of the deceaſed Jeronymo; I only ſtipulated for a delay of a fortnight, in order, as I pretended,

to prepare, in a ſuitable manner, for an act ſo ſolemn.—The time being expired, and my machinery in readineſs, I took advantage of a very gloomy day, when we were all aſſembled as uſual, to communicate the affair to the family, and not only brought them to conſent to it, but even to make it a ſubject of their own requeſt.—The moſt difficult part of the taſk was to obtain the approbation of Antonia, whoſe preſence was eſſential.—My endeavours were, however, greatly aſſiſted by the melancholy turn of her mind, and perhaps ſtill more ſo, by a faint hope, that Jeronymo might ſtill be living, and therefore would not appear.—A want of confidence in the thing itſelf was the only obſtacle which I had to remove.—Having obtained the conſent of the family, the third day was fixed on for the operation; I prepared then for the ſolemn tranſaction, by myſtical inſtruction, faſting, ſolitude and prayers, which I ordered to be continued till late in the night.—Much uſe was alſo made of a certain muſical inſtrument*, unknown till that time; and, in ſuch caſes, it has often been found very powerful.—The effect of theſe artifices was ſo much beyond my expectation, that the enthuſiaſm which on this occaſion I was obliged to ſhew, was infinitely heightened by that of my audience.—The long expected moment at laſt arrived.

"I gueſs," ſaid the Prince, "whom you are now going to introduce.—But go on, go on."

"Your

* The Eolian harp.

" Your Highneſs is miſtaken.—The deception ſucceeded according to my wiſhes."

" How! Where then is the Armenian?"

" Your Highneſs's patience: he will appear but too ſoon. I omit the deſcription of the juggling farce itſelf, as it would be too tedious to relate.—It is ſufficient to ſay, that it anſwered my expectation; the old Marquis, the young Counteſs, her mother, Lorenzo, and ſeveral other perſons of the family were preſent.—You will imagine, that during my long reſidence in the houſe I took all opportunities of gathering information reſpecting every thing that concerned the deceaſed.—Several of his portraits enabled me to give the apparition a ſtriking likeneſs; and as I ſuffered the ghoſt to ſpeak only by ſigns, that the ſound of his voice might excite no ſuſpicion, the departed Jeronymo appeared in the dreſs of a Mooriſh Slave, with a deep wound in his neck.—You obſerve, that in this reſpect I was counteracting the general ſuppoſition that he had periſhed in the waves, I had reaſon to hope, that this unexpected circumſtance would heighten the belief in the apparition itſelf; for nothing appeared to me more dangerous than to be too natural."

" I think you judged well," ſaid the Prince; " in whatever reſpects apparitions, the moſt probable is the leaſt acceptable. If their communications are eaſily comprehended, we undervalue the channel by which they are obtained; nay, we even ſuſpect the reality of the miracle, if the diſcoveries which it brings to light are ſuch as might eaſily have been imagined.—

gined.—Why ſhould we diſturb the repoſe of a ſpirit, to inform us of nothing more than the ordinary powers of the intellect are capable of teaching us?—But, on the other hand, if the intelligence which we receive be extraordinary and unexpected, it confirms, in ſome degree, the miracle by which it is obtained; for who can doubt an operation to be ſupernatural, when its effect could not be produced by natural means? I have interrupted you," added the Prince. "Proceed in your narrative."

"I aſked the ghoſt, whether there was any thing in this world which he ſtill conſidered as his own, and whether he had left any thing behind that was particularly dear to him? The ghoſt thrice ſhook his head, and lifted up his hands towards heaven. Previous to his retiring, he dropt a ring from his finger, which was found on the floor after he had diſappeared; Antonia took it, and, looking at it attentively, ſhe knew it to be the wedding-ring ſhe had preſented to her intended huſband."

"The wedding-ring!" exclaimed the Prince, with ſurpriſe. "How did you get it?"

"Who?—I!—It was not the true one!—I procured it.—It was only a counterfeit."

"A counterfeit!" repeated the Prince. "But in order to counterfeit, you muſt have been in poſſeſſion of the true one. How did you come at it? Surely the deceaſed never went without it."

"That is true," replied the Sicilian, apparently confuſed. "But, from a deſcription which

which was given me of the original wedding-ring——"

"A deſcription which was given you! by whom?"

"Long before that time. It was a plain gold ring, and had, I believe, the name of the young Counteſs engraved on it. But you made me loſe the connection."

"What happened farther?" ſaid the Prince, with a very diſſatisfied countenance.

"The family fancied themſelves convinced that Jeronymo was no more. From that very day they publicly announced his death, and went into mourning. The circumſtance of the ring left no doubt even in the mind of Antonia, and added a conſiderable weight to the addreſſes of the Chevalier.

"In the mean time, the violent impreſſion which the young Counteſs had received from the ſight of the apparition brought on her a diſorder ſo dangerous, that the hopes of Lorenzo were very near being deſtroyed for ever. On her recovering, ſhe inſiſted upon taking the veil; and it was only by the ſerious remonſtrances of her confeſſor, in whom ſhe placed an implicit confidence, that ſhe was brought to abandon her project. At length, the united ſolicitations of the family, aided by the confeſſor, wreſted from her the deſired conſent. The laſt day of mourning was fixed on for the day of marriage, and the old Marquis determined to add to the ſolemnity of the occaſion, by reſigning all his eſtates to his lawful heir. The day arrived, and Lorenzo received his trembling bride at the altar. In the even-

ing,

ing, a ſplendid banquet was prepared for the gueſts, in a hall ſuperbly illuminated. The moſt lively and delightful muſic contributed to increaſe the general joy of the aſſembly. The venerable Marquis wiſhed all the world to participate in his felicity. The gates of the palace were thrown open, and every one that came in was joyfully welcomed. In the midſt of the throng"—The Sicilian pauſed—A trembling expectation ſuſpended our breath.

"In the midſt of the throng," continued the priſoner, "appeared a Franciſcan monk, to whom my attention was directed by a perſon who ſat next to me at table.

"He was ſtanding motionleſs like a marble pillar. His ſhape was tall and thin; his face pale and ghaſtly; his aſpect grave and mournful; and his eyes were fixed on the new-married couple. The joy which beamed on the face of every one preſent, appeared not on his. His countenance never once varied.—He ſeemed like a ſtatue among living perſons. Such an object, appearing amidſt the general joy, ſtruck me more forcibly from its contraſt with every thing around me. It left on my mind ſo durable an impreſſion, that from it alone I have been enabled (which would otherwiſe have been impoſſible) to recollect in the Ruſſian officer the features of this Franciſcan monk; for without doubt you muſt have already conceived, that the perſon I have deſcribed was no other than your Armenian. I frequently attempted to withdraw my eyes from this figure, but they returned involuntarily, and found him always unaltered. I

pointed

pointed him out to the perſon who ſat neareſt to me on the other ſide, and he did the ſame to the perſon next to him. In a few minutes, a general curioſity and aſtoniſhment pervaded the whole company. The converſation languiſhed; a general ſilence ſucceeded; nor did the monk interrupt it. He continued motionleſs, and always the ſame; his grave and mournful looks conſtantly fixed upon the new-married couple:—His appearance ſtruck every one with terror. The young Counteſs alone, who found the tranſcript of her own ſorrow in the face of the ſtranger, beheld with a ſullen ſatisfaction the only object that ſeemed to ſympathize in her ſufferings. The crowd inſenſibly diminiſhed, for it was paſt midnight. The muſic became faint and languid; the tapers grew dim, and many of them went out. The converſation, declining by degrees, loſt itſelf at laſt in ſecret murmurs, and the faintly illuminated hall was nearly deſerted. The monk, in the mean time, continued motionleſs, his grave and mournful look ſtill fixed on the new-married couple. The company at length roſe from the table. The gueſts diſperſed. The family aſſembled in a ſeparate group, and the Monk, though uninvited, continued near them. How it happened that no perſon ſpoke to him, I cannot conceive.

"The female friends now ſurrounded the trembling bride, who caſt a ſupplicating and diſtreſſed look on the awful ſtranger; but he did not anſwer it. The gentlemen aſſembled in the ſame manner around the bridegroom.

A ſolemn

A ſolemn and anxious ſilence prevailed among them.

" At length — How happy we are here together!" ſaid the old Marquis, who alone ſeemed not to behold the ſtranger, or at leaſt ſeemed to behold him without diſmay :—" How happy we are here together, and my ſon Jeronymo cannot be with us!"

" Have you not invited him, and did not he anſwer your invitation?" aſked the Monk.

" It was the firſt time he had ſpoken. We looked at him alarmed.

" Alas! he is gone to a place whence there is no return,"—anſwered the old man.—" Reverend father! You miſunderſtood me. My ſon Jeronymo is dead."

" Perhaps he only fears to appear in this company,"—replied the Monk.—" Who knows how your ſon Jeronymo may be ſituated? Let him now hear the voice which he heard the laſt. Deſire your ſon Lorenzo to call him."

" What does he mean?" whiſpered the company one to another.

" Lorenzo changed colour. My own hair almoſt ſtood erect on my head. In the mean time the Monk approached a ſideboard. He took a glaſs of wine, and bringing it to his lips, " To the memory of our dear Jeronymo!" ſaid he; " Every one who loved the deceaſed will follow my example."

" Wherever you come from, reverend father," exclaimed the old Marquis—" you have pronounced a dearly beloved name, and you are welcome here;" then turning to us, he offered us full glaſſes—" Come, my friends! let

let us not be ſurpaſſed by a ſtranger. "The memory of my ſon Jeronymo?"

"Never, I believe, was any toaſt leſs heartily received.

"There is one glaſs left," ſaid the Marquis.—"Why does my ſon Lorenzo refuſe to pay this friendly tribute?"

"Lorenzo, trembling, received the glaſs from the hands of the Monk. Trembling he put it to his lips. "My dearly beloved brother Jeronymo!" The name trembled on his tongue, and, being ſeized with horror, he replaced the glaſs unemptied.

"That is the voice of my murderer!" exclaimed a terrible figure, which appeared inſtantaneouſly in the midſt of us, covered with blood, and disfigured with horrible wounds.

"But aſk nothing further from me," added the Sicilian, with every ſymptom of horror in his countenance. "I loſt my ſenſes the moment I looked at this apparition. The ſame happened to every one preſent. When we recovered, the Monk and the ghoſt had diſappeared. Lorenzo was in the agonies of death. He was carried to bed in the moſt dreadful convulſions. No perſon attended him but his confeſſor and the ſorrowful old Marquis, in whoſe preſence he expired.—The Marquis died a few weeks after him. Lorenzo's ſecret is concealed in the boſom of the prieſt who received his laſt confeſſion; and no perſon ever learnt what it was.

"Soon after this event, a deep well was cleaned in the farm-yard of the Marquis's villa. It had been diſuſed many years, and the

the mouth of it was almoſt cloſed up by ſhrubs and old trees. A ſkeleton was found among the rubbiſh. The houſe where this happened is now no more; the family del M—— is extinct, and Antonia's tomb may be ſeen in a convent not far from Salerno."

Aſtoniſhment kept us ſilent.

"You ſee," continued the Sicilian, "how my acquaintance with the Ruſſian officer, Armenian, or Franciſcan friar has originated. Judge whether I had not cauſe to tremble at the ſight of a being, who has twice placed himſelf in my way in a manner ſo terrible."

"I beg you will anſwer me one queſtion more," ſaid the Prince, riſing from his ſeat; "Have you been ſincere in your account of the Chevalier?"

"Yes, your Highneſs, to the beſt of my knowledge."—"You really believe him to be an honeſt man?"

"I do, by heaven! I believe him to be an honeſt man?"

"Even at the time that he gave you the ring?"—"How! he gave me no ring. I did not ſay that he gave me the ring."

"Very well!" ſaid the Prince, pulling the bell, and preparing to depart. "And you believe" (going back to the priſoner) "that the ghoſt of the Marquis de Lanoy, which the Ruſſian officer introduced after your apparition, was a real ghoſt?"

"I cannot think otherwiſe."

"Let us go!" ſaid the Prince, addreſſing himſelf to us. The Jailor came in. "We have done," ſaid the Prince to him. "As for

for you," turning to the priſoner, "you ſhall hear farther from me."

"I am tempted to aſk your Highneſs the laſt queſtion you propoſed to the Conjurer," ſaid I to the Prince, when we were alone. "Do you believe the ſecond ghoſt to have been a real one?"

"I believe it! No, not now, moſt aſſuredly."

"Not now? Then you did once believe it."

"I confeſs I was tempted for a moment to believe it to have been ſomething more than the contrivance of a juggler; and I could wiſh to ſee the man, who under ſimilar circumſtances would not have formed the ſame ſuppoſition."

"But what reaſon have you for altering your opinion? What the priſoner has related of the Armenian, ought to increaſe rather than diminiſh your belief in his ſupernatural powers."

"What this wretch has related of him!" ſaid the Prince, interrupting me very gravely. "I hope," continued he, "you have not now any doubt that we have had to do with a villain."

"No, but muſt his evidence on that account—"

"The evidence of a villain! Suppoſe I had no other reaſon for doubt, the evidence of ſuch a perſon can be of no weight againſt common ſenſe and eſtabliſhed truth. Does a man who has already deceived me ſeveral times, and whoſe trade it is to deceive, does

he

he deſerve to be heard in a cauſe in which the unſupported teſtimony of even the moſt ſincere adherent to truth could not be received? Ought we to believe a man who perhaps never once ſpoke truth for its own ſake? Does ſuch a man deſerve credit, when he appears as evidence againſt human reaſon and the eternal laws of nature? Would it not be as abſurd as to admit the accuſation of a perſon notoriouſly infamous againſt unblemiſhed and reproachleſs innocence?"

"But what motives could he have for giving ſo great a character to a man whom he has ſo many reaſons to hate?"

"I am not to conclude that he can have no motives for doing this, becauſe I am unable to comprehend them? Do I know who has bribed him to deceive me? I confeſs I cannot penetrate through the myſtery of this plan; but he has certainly done a material injury to the cauſe he contends for, by ſhewing himſelf at leaſt an impoſtor, and perhaps ſomething worſe."

"The circumſtance of the ring, I allow, appears ſuſpicious."

"It is more than ſuſpicious, it is deciſive. He received this ring from the murderer. Let us even ſuppoſe the circumſtances he has related are true; at the moment he received it, he muſt have been certain that it was from the perpetrator of the murder. Who but the aſſaſſin could have taken from Jeronymo's finger a ring, which he undoubtedly never was without? Throughout the whole of his narration, the Sicilian has laboured to perſuade us, that

while

while he was endeavouring to deceive Lorenzo, Lorenzo was in reality deceiving him. Would he have had recourſe to this ſubterfuge, if he had not been ſenſible that he ſhould loſe much of our confidence, by confeſſing himſelf an accomplice with the aſſaſſin? The whole ſtory is viſibly nothing but a ſeries of impoſtures, invented merely to connect the few truths he has thought proper to give us. Ought I then to heſitate in diſbelieving the eleventh aſſertion of a perſon who has already deceived me ten times, rather than admit a violation of the fundamental laws of nature, which I have ever found in the moſt perfect harmony?"

"I have nothing to reply to all this; but the apparition we ſaw is to me not the leſs incomprehenſible."

"It is alſo incomprehenſible to me, altho' I have been tempted to find a key to it."

"How?"

"Do not you recollect that the ſecond apparition, as ſoon as he entered, walked directly up to the altar, took the crucifix in his hand, and placed himſelf upon the carpet?"

"It appeared ſo to me."

"And this crucifix, according to the Sicilian's confeſſion, was a conductor. You ſee, that the apparition haſtened to make himſelf electrical. Thus the blow which Lord Seymour ſtruck him with his ſword, muſt of neceſſity be ineffectual, the electric ſtroke having diſabled his arm."

"That is true with reſpect to the ſword. But the piſtol fired by the Sicilian, the ball of which rolled ſlowly upon the altar—"

"Are

"Are you convinced that this was the ſame ball which was fired from the piſtol? Not to mention that the puppet, or the man who repreſented the ghoſt, may have been ſo well accoutred as to be invulnerable by ſwords or bullets; but conſider who had loaded the piſtols."

"True," ſaid I; and a ſudden light darted into my mind. "The Ruſſian officer had loaded them, but it was in our preſence. How could he have deceived us?"

"Why ſhould he not have deceived us? Did you ſuſpect him ſufficiently to obſerve him? Did you examine the ball before it was put into the piſtol? It may have been one of quickſilver or clay. Did you take notice whether the Ruſſian officer really put it into the barrel, or dropped it into his other hand? But ſuppoſing that he actually loaded the piſtols, how can you be ſure that he did not leave them behind him, and take ſome unloaded ones into the room where the ghoſt appeared. He might very eaſily have exchanged them while we were undreſſing. No perſon ever thought of noticing him in particular. It is very poſſible too, that the figure, at the moment when we were prevented from ſeeing it by the ſmoke of the piſtol, might have dropped another ball on the altar. Which of theſe conjectures is impoſſible?"

"Your Highneſs is right. But that ſtriking reſemblance to your deceaſed friend! I have often ſeen him with you, and I immediately recognized him in the apparition."

"I did

"I did the ſame, and I muſt confeſs the illuſion was complete; but as the juggler, from a few ſecret glances at the ſnuff-box, was able to give to his apparition ſuch a likeneſs as deceived us both, what was to prevent the Ruſſian officer (who had uſed the box during the whole time of ſupper, who had liberty to obſerve the picture unnoticed, and to whom I had diſcovered in confidence the perſon it repreſented) from doing the ſame? Add to this, what has been before obſerved by the Sicilian, that the prominent features of the Marquis were ſo ſtriking as to be eaſily imitated. What now remains to be explained reſpecting the ſecond ghoſt?"

"The words he uttered, the information he gave you about your friend."

"What? Did not the juggler aſſure us, that from the little which he had learnt from me, he had compoſed a ſimilar ſtory? Does not this prove that the invention was obvious and natural? Beſide, the anſwers of the ghoſt, like thoſe of an oracle, were ſo obſcure, that he was in no danger of being detected in a falſehood. If the man who perſonated the ghoſt poſſeſſed ſagacity and preſence of mind, and knew ever ſo little of the affairs on which he was conſulted, to what length might he not have carried the deception?"

"I beg your Highneſs to conſider, how much preparation ſuch a complicated artifice would have required from the Armenian; what a time it requires to paint a face with ſufficient exactneſs; what a time would have been requiſite to inſtruct the pretended ghoſt, ſo as

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to guard him againſt groſs errors; what a degree of minute attention to regulate every attendant or adventitious circumſtance which might be uſeful or detrimental. And remember, that the Ruſſian officer was abſent but half an hour. Was that ſhort ſpace ſufficient to make even ſuch arrangements as were indiſpenſably neceſſary? Surely not. Even a dramatic writer, who has the leaſt deſire to preſerve the three unities of Ariſtotle, durſt not venture to load the interval between one act and another with ſuch a variety of actions, or to ſuppoſe in his audience ſuch a facility of belief."

"What! You think it abſolutely impoſſible that every neceſſary preparation ſhould have been made in the ſpace of half an hour."

"Indeed, I look upon it as almoſt impoſſible."

"I do not underſtand this expreſſion. Does it militate againſt the laws of time and ſpace, or of matter and motion, that a man ſo ingenious and ſo expert as this Armenian muſt neceſſarily be, aſſiſted by agents whoſe dexterity and acuteneſs are probably not inferior to his own, provided with ſuch means and inſtruments as a man of this profeſſion is never without; is it impoſſible that ſuch a man, favoured by ſuch circumſtances, ſhould effect ſo much in ſo ſhort a time? Is it abſurd to ſuppoſe, that by a very ſmall number of words or ſigns, he can convey to his aſſiſtants very extenſive commiſſions, and direct very complex operations? Nothing ought to be admitted againſt the eſtabliſhed laws of nature, unleſs

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it is ſomething with which theſe laws are abſolutely incompatible. Would you rather give credit to a miracle than admit an improbability? Would you ſolve a difficulty rather by overturning the powers of nature, than by believing an artful and uncommon combination of them?"

"Though the fact will not juſtify a concluſion ſuch as you have condemned, you muſt however grant that it is far beyond our conception."

"I am almoſt tempted to diſpute even this," ſaid the Prince, with a ſarcaſtic ſmile. "What would you ſay, my dear Count, if it ſhould be proved, for inſtance, that the operations of the Armenian were prepared and carried on not only during the half hour that he was abſent from us, not only in haſte and incidentally, but during the whole evening and the whole night? You recollect that the Sicilian employed near three hours in preparation."

"The Sicilian, your Highneſs!"

"And how will you convince me that this juggler had not as much concern in the ſecond apparition as in the firſt?"

"How!"

"That he was not the principal aſſiſtant of the Armenian—In a word, how will you convince me that they did not co-operate?"

"It would be a difficult taſk to prove that they did," exclaimed I, with no little ſurpriſe.

"Not ſo difficult, my dear Count, as you imagine. What! could it have happened by mere chance that theſe two men ſhould form

a deſign ſo extraordinary and ſo complicated upon the ſame perſon, at the ſame time, and in the ſame place? Could mere chance have produced ſuch an exact harmony between their operations, that one of them ſhould appear as if ſubſervient to the other? Suppoſe the Armenian has intended to heighten the effect of his deception, by introducing it after a leſs refined one; that he has created a Hector to make himſelf an Achilles. Suppoſe he has done all this, to ſee what degree of credulity he ſhould find in me; to examine the avenues to my confidence; to familiarize himſelf with his ſubject by an attempt that might have miſcarried without any prejudice to his plan; in a word, to try the inſtrument on which he intended to play. Suppoſe he has done this with a view to draw my attention on himſelf, in order to divert it from another object more important to his deſign. Laſtly, ſuppoſe he wiſhes to have imputed to the juggler ſome indirect methods of information which himſelf has had occaſion to practiſe."

"What do you mean?"

"It is poſſible that he may have bribed ſome of my ſervants to give him ſecret intelligence, or perhaps ſome papers which may ſerve his purpoſe. One of my domeſtics has abſconded. What reaſon have I to think that the Armenian is not concerned in his leaving me? Such a connection, however, if it exiſts, may be accidentally diſcovered; a letter may be intercepted; a ſervant, who is in the ſecret, may betray his truſt. Now all the conſequence of the Armenian is deſtroyed, if I detect the

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ſource of his omniſcience; he therefore introduces this juggler, who muſt be ſuppoſed to have the ſame or ſome other deſign upon me. He takes care to give me early notice of him and his intentions, ſo that whatever I may hereafter diſcover, my ſuſpicions muſt neceſſarily reſt upon the Sicilian. This is the puppet with which he amuſes me, whilſt he himſelf, unobſerved and unſuſpected, is entangling me in inviſible ſnares."

"We will allow this. But is it conſiſtent with the Armenian's plan, that he himſelf ſhould deſtroy the illuſion which he has created, and diſcloſe the myſteries of his ſcience to the eyes of the profane?"

"What myſteries does he diſcloſe? None, ſurely, which he intends to practiſe on me; he therefore loſes nothing by the diſcovery. But on the other hand, what an advantage will he gain if this pretended victory over juggling and deception ſhould render me ſecure and unſuſpecting; if he ſucceeds in diverting my attention from the right quarter (I mean himſelf,) and in fixing my wavering ſuſpicions on an object moſt remote from the real one. If at any time, either from my own doubts or at the ſuggeſtion of another, I ſhould be tempted to ſeek in the occult ſciences for a key to his myſterious wonders, how could he better provide againſt ſuch an enquiry than by contraſting his prodigies with the tricks of the juggler? By confining the latter within artificial limits, and by delivering, as it were, into my hands, a ſcale by which to appreciate them, he naturally exalts and perplexes my ideas of the former.

mer. How many ſuſpicions does he preclude by this ſingle contrivance! How many methods of accounting for his miracles, which might afterwards have occurred to me, does he refute beforehand!"

"But in expoſing ſuch a finiſhed deception, he has very much counteracted his own intereſt, both by quickening the penetration of thoſe whom he meant to impoſe upon, and by ſtaggering their belief of miracles in general. If he had had ſuch a plan, your Highneſs's ſelf is the beſt proof of its inſufficiency."

"Perhaps he has been miſtaken in reſpect to myſelf, but his concluſions have nevertheleſs been well founded. Could he foreſee that I ſhould exactly notice the very circumſtance which expoſed the whole artifice? Was it in his plan, that the creature he employed ſhould be ſo communicative? Are we certain that the Sicilian has not far exceeded his commiſſion? He has undoubtedly done ſo with reſpect to the ring, and yet it is chiefly this ſingle circumſtance which determined my diſtruſt in him. A plan whoſe contexture is ſo artful and refined, is eaſily ſpoiled in the execution by an aukward inſtrument. It certainly was not the Armenian's intention that the juggler ſhould ſpeak to us in the ſtyle of a mountebank, that he ſhould endeavour to impoſe upon us ſuch fables as are too groſs to bear the leaſt reflection. For inſtance, with what countenance could this impoſtor affirm, that the miraculous being he ſpoke of, renounces all commerce with mankind at twelve in the night?

night? Did not we ſee him among us at that very hour?"

"That is true. He muſt have forgot it."

"People of this deſcription naturally overact their parts, and by exceeding every limit of credibility mar the effects which a well-managed deception is calculated to produce."

"I cannot, however, yet prevail on myſelf to look upon the whole as a mere contrivance of art. What! the Sicilian's terrors, his convulſive fits, his ſword, the deplorable ſituation in which we ſaw him, and which was even ſuch as to move our pity; were all theſe nothing more than the mimicry of an actor? I allow that a ſkilful performer may carry imitation to a very high pitch, but he certainly has no power over the organs of life.

"As for that, my friend, I have ſeen the celebrated Garrick in the character of Richard the Third. But were we at that moment ſufficiently cool to be capable of obſerving diſpaſſionately? Could we judge of the emotions of the Sicilian, when we were almoſt overcome by our own? Beſides, the deciſive criſis, even of a deception, is ſo momentous to the deceiver himſelf, that exceſſive anxiety may produce in him ſymptoms as violent as thoſe which ſurprize excites in the deceived. Add to this, the unexpected entrance of the watch."

"I am glad your Highneſs mentions that. Would the Armenian have ventured to diſcover ſuch an infamous ſcheme to the eye of juſtice, to expoſe the fidelity of his creature to ſuch a dangerous teſt? And for what purpoſe?"

"Leave

" Leave that matter to him; he is, no doubt, acquainted with the people he employs. Do we know what ſecret crimes may have ſecured him the diſcretion of this man? You have been informed of the office he holds at Venice; what difficulty will he find in ſaving a man, of whom himſelf is the only accuſer?"

(This ſuggeſtion of the Prince was but too well juſtified by the event. For, ſome days after, on enquiring about the priſoner, we were told that he had eſcaped, and had not ſince been heard of.)

" You aſk what could be his motives for delivering this man into the hands of juſtice?" continued the Prince. " By what other method, except this violent one, could he have wreſted from the Sicilian ſuch an infamous and improbable confeſſion, which, however, was material to the ſucceſs of his plan? Who but a man whoſe caſe is deſperate, and who has nothing to loſe, would conſent to give ſo humiliating an account of himſelf? Under what other circumſtances than ſuch as theſe could we have believed ſuch a confeſſion?"

" I grant your Highneſs all this. The two apparitions were mere contrivances of art: The Sicilian has impoſed upon us a tale which the Armenian his maſter had previouſly taught him: The efforts of both have been directed to the ſame end; and by this mutual intelligence all the wonderful incidents that have aſtoniſhed us in this adventure may be eaſily explained. But the prophecy of the ſquare of St. Mark, that firſt miracle, which as it were opened the door to all the reſt, remains ſtill unexplained; and

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of what uſe is the key to all his other wonders, if we muſt deſpair of reſolving this ſingle one?"

"Rather invert the propoſition, my dear Count, and ſay, what do all theſe wonders prove if I can demonſtrate that a ſingle one among them is a manifeſt deception? The prediction, I allow is above my conception. If it had ſtopped there, if the Armenian had cloſed the ſcene with it, I confeſs, I do not know how far I might have been carried. But in the baſe alloy with which it is mixed, it is certainly ſuſpicious."

"Gracious Sir, I grant it; but it ſtill remains incomprehenſible, and I defy all our philoſophy to explain it."

"But," continued the Prince, "can it be really ſo inexplicable?" After a few moments reflection—"I am far from pretending to the title of a philoſopher, and yet I am almoſt tempted to account for this miracle in a natural way, or at leaſt to deprive it entirely of any extraordinary appearance."

"If your Highneſs can do that," replied I, with a very unbelieving ſmile, "you will be the only wonder in which I have any faith."

"And as a proof," continued he, "how little we are juſtified in flying to ſupernatural powers for an explanation, I will point out to you two different ways by which we may perhaps account for this event, without doing any violence to nature."

"Two ways at once! You do indeed raiſe my expectations."

"You

"You have read, as well as I, the laſt account of my late couſin's illneſs. He died of an apoplexy. It was an attack during a fit of the ague. The extraordinarineſs of his death, I confeſs it, induced me to aſk the opinions of ſome phyſicians upon the ſubject, and the knowledge which I acquired from that circumſtance gives me a clue to this enchantment. The diſorder of my deceaſed relative, which was one of a moſt uncommon and alarming nature, had this peculiar ſymptom, that during the fit of the ague it threw the patient into a deep and irrecoverable ſleep, which naturally put an end to his exiſtence on the return of the apoplectic paroxiſm. As theſe paroxiſms return in the moſt regular order, and at an appointed hour, the phyſician is enabled, from the very moment in which he forms his opinion on the nature of the diſorder, to predict the hour of the patient's deceaſe. The third paroxiſm of a tertian ague will fall to a certainty on the fifth day after the appearance of the illneſs, and that is exactly the length of time neceſſary for the carriage of a letter from ***, where my couſin died, to Venice. Let us ſuppoſe then that our Armenian poſſeſſes a vigilant correſpondent among the attendants of the deceaſed; that he was very much intereſted to gain information from thence; that he had views upon my perſon, to the proſecution of which my belief in the wonderful and the appearance of ſupernatural powers would greatly conduce—thus you have a natural clue to this prediction, which is ſo inconceivable to you. This is ſufficient,

ſufficient, for you may hence ſee the poſſibility of a third perſon's informing another of a death which happened at the moment when he announced it, in a place at forty miles diſtance."

"In truth, your Highneſs in this inſtance combines things together, which, taken ſingly, appear very natural, but which could only be brought together by ſomething than is not much better than enchantment."

"What! Do you then fear a wonder leſs than an uncommon plan? As ſoon as we allow that the Armenian is engaged in a plan of conſequence, of which my deſtruction is either the end or at leaſt conducive to it, (and may we not form that opinion of him with which his appearance firſt inſpired us?) nothing will ſeem natural or forced, which could bring his ſcheme to a concluſion in the moſt expeditious manner. But what way could he deviſe more expeditious, than the ſecuring his object by putting on the appearance of a miracle-worker? Who can reſiſt a man, to whom the ſpirits are obedient? However, I grant you that my conjectures are not perfectly natural; I confeſs that I am not even myſelf ſatisfied with them. I do not inſiſt upon it, becauſe I do not think it worth my while to call into my aſſiſtance a well formed and deliberate deſign, when it may at laſt turn out to be a mere accident."

"What!" replied I; "it may be a mere accident?"

"Certainly, nothing more!" continued the Prince. "The Armenian was aware of the

danger of my couſin. He met us in the place of St. Mark. The opportunity invited him to hazard a prophecy, which, if it failed, would be nothing more than a looſe word—but if it ſucceeded, might be of the greateſt conſequence. The event was favourable to this attempt—and he might ſtill deſign to make uſe of the gift of prophecy for the connection of his plan—Time will diſcloſe this ſecret, or bury it in oblivion. But believe me, friend, (while he laid his hand upon mine, with a very earneſt countenance) a man, to whoſe word the higher powers are obedient, will either not want the aſſiſtance of deception, or at leaſt will deſpiſe it."

"Thus," ſays Count O . . . "ended a converſation which I have faithfully related, becauſe it ſhews the difficulties which were to be overcome before the Prince could be effectually impoſed upon. I hope it may free his memory from the imputation of having blindly and inconſiderately thrown himſelf into a ſnare which was ſpread for his deſtruction by the moſt unexampled and diabolical iniquity. Many, at the moment I am writing this, are, perhaps, ſmiling contemptuouſly at the Prince's credulity; but not all thoſe who, in the fancied ſuperiority of their own underſtanding, think themſelves entitled to condemn him; not all thoſe, I apprehend, would have reſiſted this firſt attempt with ſo much firmneſs. If afterwards, notwithſtanding this happy preposſeſſion, we witneſs his downfall; if we ſee that the black deſign againſt which, at its very opening, he was thus providentially warned,

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is finally ſucceſsful, we ſhall not be ſo much inclined to ridicule his weakneſs, as to be aſtoniſhed at the infamous ingenuity of a plot which could ſeduce an underſtanding ſo admirable prepared. Conſiderations of intereſt have no influence in my teſtimony. He, who alone would be thankful for it, is now no more. His dreadful deſtiny is accompliſhed. His ſoul has long ſince been purified before the throne of truth, where mine muſt likewiſe ſhortly appear. Pardon the involuntary tears which now flow at the remembrance of my deceaſed friend—But for the ſake of juſtice I write this hiſtory. He was a great character, and would have adorned a throne which, ſeduced by the moſt atrocious artifice, he attempted to aſcend by the commiſſion of a murder.

"Not long after theſe events," continues the Count d'O .... in his narrative, "I began to obſerve an extraordinary alteration in the diſpoſition of the Prince, which was partly the immediate conſequence of the laſt event, and partly produced by the concurrence of many adventitious circumſtances; for hitherto the Prince had avoided every ſevere trial of his faith, and contented himſelf with purifying the rude and unabſtracted notions of religion in which he had been educated, by thoſe more rational ideas upon this ſubject which obtruded themſelves upon him, or with comparing the diſcordant opinions with each other, without enquiring into the foundations of his faith. The reſtraints impoſed by religion in general, he has many times confeſſed to me,

always

always appeared to him like an enchanted caſtle, into which one does not ſet one's foot without horror, and that we act a much wiſer part if for that reaſon we paſs it with a willing reſignation, without expoſing ourſelves to the danger of being bewildered in its labyrinths; nevertheleſs, a contrary propenſity irreſiſtibly impelled him to thoſe reſearches which were connected with it. A ſervile and bigotted education was the ſource of this dread: this had impreſſed frightful images upon his tender brain, which he was never able perfectly to obliterate during his whole life. Religious melancholy was an hereditary diſorder in his family. The education which he and his brothers received was actuated by this principle; the men to whoſe care they were entruſted, ſelected with this view, were alſo either enthuſiaſts or hypocrites.

"To ſtifle all the ſprightlineſs of the boy by a gloomy reſtraint of his mental faculties, was the only method of ſecuring to themſelves the approbation of his noble parents. Such was the dark and gloomy aſpect which the whole of our Prince's childhood wore. Mirth was baniſhed even from his amuſements. All his ideas of religion were accompanied by ſome frightful image, and the repreſentations of terror and ſeverity were thoſe which firſt poſſeſſed themſelves of his lively imagination, and which alſo the longeſt retained their empire over it. His God was an object of terror, a being whoſe ſole occupation is the chaſtiſement of his creatures. The adoration which he paid to him, a blind ſubmiſſion ſtifling all his

his courage and vigour. In all his infantine and youthful propenſities, which a ſtout body and blooming conſtitution naturally excited to break out with greater violence, religion ſtood in his way; ſhe oppoſed every thing upon which his youthful heart was bent; he learned to conſider her not as a friend, but as the ſcourge of his paſſions; ſo that a ſilent indignation was continually kindled againſt her in his heart, which, together with a revering faith and a blind dread, made both in his heart and head the ſtrangeſt mixture—an abhorrence of the Lord before whom he trembled. It is no wonder, therefore, that he took the firſt opportunity of eſcaping from ſo galling a yoke—but he fled from it as a bond-ſlave from his rigorous maſter, who even in the midſt of freedom drags along with him a ſenſe of his ſervitude; for, as he did not renounce the faith of his earlier years from a deliberate conviction, as he did not wait till the maturity and improvement of his reaſon had weaned him from it, as he had eſcaped from it like a fugitive, upon whoſe perſon the rights of his maſter are ſtill in force, ſo was he obliged, even after his wideſt ſeparation, to return to it at laſt. He had eſcaped with his chain, and for that reaſon muſt neceſſarily become the prey of any one who ſhould diſcover it, and know how to make uſe of the diſcovery. That he did conſider himſelf in ſuch a light, though the reader may not yet have ſuppoſed ſo, the ſequel of this hiſtory will prove.

"The confeſſions of the Sicilian left impreſſed upon his mind more important concluſions

eluſions than the whole of the circumſtance deſerved; and the ſmall victory which his reaſon had thence gained over this weak impoſture, remarkably increaſed his reliance upon it. The facility with which he had been able to unravel this deception, appeared to have perfectly overwhelmed him. Truth and error were not yet ſo accurately diſtinguiſhed from each other in his mind, but that he often happened to miſtake the arguments which were in favour of the one for thoſe which were in favour of the other. Thence it aroſe, that the ſame blow which urged his faith to credulity, made the whole edifice of it totter. In this inſtance he fell into the ſame error as an unexperienced man who has been deceived in love or friendſhip becauſe he made a bad choice, and who drops all credit in theſe ſenſations, becauſe he takes mere incidental circumſtances for their actual diſtinguiſhing features. The unmaſking of a deception made even truth ſuſpicious to him, becauſe he had unfortunately diſcovered the truth on very weak grounds.

This imaginary triumph pleaſed him in proportion to the magnitude of the oppreſſion from which it ſeemed to have delivered him. From this inſtant there aroſe in his mind a ſcepticiſm which did not ſpare even the moſt venerable objects.

" Many circumſtances concurred to encourage him in this turn of mind, and ſtill more to confirm him in it.

He now quitted the retirement in which he had hitherto lived, and was obliged to give way

way to a more diſſipated mode of life. His rank was diſcovered. Attentions which he was obliged to return, etiquettes for which he was indebted to his rank, drew him imperceptibly within the vortex of the great world. His rank, as well as his perſonal attractions, opened to him the circles of all the *beaux eſprits* in Venice, and he ſoon found himſelf on terms of intimacy with the moſt enlightened perſons in the republic, the men of learning as well as politicians. This obliged him to enlarge the uniform and narrow circle to which his underſtanding had hitherto been confined. He began to perceive the poverty and debility of his ideas, and to feel the want of more elevated impreſſions. The old-faſhioned dreſs of his underſtanding, ſpite of the many advantages with which it was accompanied, formed an unpleaſing contraſt with the current ideas of ſociety; his ignorance of the commoneſt things frequently expoſed him to ridicule, and nothing did he dread ſo much as that. The unfortunate prejudice which attached to his native country, appeared to him a challenge to overcome it in his own perſon. Thence aroſe a peculiarity in his character; he was offended with every attention that he thought he owed to his rank, and not to his natural good qualities. He felt this humiliation principally in the company of perſons who ſhone by their abilities, and triumphed, as it were, over their birth by their merit. To perceive himſelf diſtinguiſhed as a prince in ſuch a ſociety, was always a baſe humiliation to him, becauſe he unfortunately conceived that by that

title

title he was totally excluded from all competition. All theſe circumſtances together convinced him of the neceſſity for the formation of his mind, which he had hitherto neglected, in order to raiſe it to a level with the thinking part of the world, from which he had remained ſo far remote; and for that purpoſe he choſe the moſt faſhionable books, to which he now applied himſelf with all the ardour with which he was accuſtomed to purſue every object he pitched upon. But the unſkilful hand that directed his choice always prompted him to ſelect ſuch as were little calculated for the improvement either of his heart or his reaſon. And even in this inſtance, he was influenced by that propenſity which rendered the charms of every thing incomprehenſible and irreſiſtible. He had neither attention nor memory for any thing that was not connected with this: his reaſon and his heart remained empty, while he was filling the vacuities in his brain with confuſed ideas.

The dazzling ſtile of the one captivated his imagination, while the ſubtlety of the other enſnared his reaſon. They were both able eaſily to poſſeſs themſelves of a mind which became the prey of any one who obtruded himſelf upon it with a good aſſurance. A courſe of reading, which had been continued with ardour for more than a year, had ſcarcely enriched him with one benevolent idea; but filled his head with doubts, which, as a natural conſequence with ſuch a character, had almoſt found an unfortunate road to his heart. In a word, he had entered this labyrinth as a credulous

credulous enthuſiaſt, had left it as a ſceptic, and was at length become a perfect free-thinker.

Among the many circles into which they had introduced him, there was a private ſociety called the Bucentauro, which, under the external ſhow of a noble and rational liberality of ſentiment, encouraged the moſt unbridled licentiouſneſs of manners and opinions. As they enumerated many of the clergy among their members, and could even boaſt of ſome cardinals at their head, the Prince was the more eaſily induced to be admitted into it.

He thought that certain dangerous truths, which reaſon diſcovers, could be no where better preſerved than in the hands of ſuch perſons, whoſe rank confined them to moderation, and who had had the advantage of hearing and examining the other ſide of the queſtion.

The Prince did not recollect that licentiouſneſs of ſentiment and manners takes ſo much the ſtronger hold among perſons of this rank, inaſmuch as they for that reaſon feel one curb leſs; and this was the caſe with the Bucentauro; moſt of whoſe members, through an execrable philoſophy, and manners worthy of ſuch a guide, were not only a diſgrace to their own rank, but even to human nature itſelf. The ſociety had its ſecret degrees; and I will believe, for the credit of the Prince, that they never thought him worthy of admiſſion into the inmoſt ſanctuary. Every one who entered this ſociety was obliged, at leaſt ſo long as he continued to be a member of it, to lay aſide all

all distinctions arising from rank, nation, or religion; in short, every general mark or distinction whatever, and to submit himself to the condition of universal equality. To be elected a member was indeed a difficult matter, as superiority of understanding alone paved the way to it. The society boasted of the highest ton and the most cultivated taste, and such indeed was its fame throughout all Venice. This, as well as the appearance of equality which predominated in it, attracted the Prince irresistibly. Sensible conversations, set off by the most admirable humour, instructive amusements, and the flower of the learned and political world, which were all attracted to this point as to their common centre, concealed from him for a long time the danger of this connection. Though he had by degrees discovered, through its mask, the spirit of the institution, as they were tired of being any longer on their guard before him, to recede was dangerous, and false shame and anxiety for his safety obliged him to conceal the displeasure which he felt. But he already began, merely from familiarity with men of this class and their sentiments, though they did not excite him to imitation, to lose the pure and charming simplicity of his character, and the delicacy of his moral feelings. His understanding, so little supported by any real knowledge, could not, without foreign assistance, solve the fallacious sophisms with which he had been here ensnared; and this fatal corroder had consumed all, or nearly all, on which his morality rested. He gave away the

natural and neceſſary ſupports of his happineſs for ſophiſms which deſerted him at a critical moment, and conſequently obliged him to abide by the beſt deciſion which ſhould firſt offer itſelf.

Perhaps it was yet left to the hand of a friend to extricate him at a proper opportunity from this abyſs; but, beſides that I did not become acquainted with the interior of the Bucentauro till long after the evil had taken place, an urgent circumſtance called me away from Venice juſt at the beginning of this period. Moreover, Lord Seymour, a valuable acquaintance of the Prince's, whoſe underſtanding was proof againſt every ſpecies of deception, and who would have infallibly been a ſecure ſupport to him, left us at this time in order to return to his native country. Thoſe in whoſe hands I left the Prince were very worthy men, but inexperienced, exceſſively narrow in their religious opinions, and as much deficient in inſight into the evil as in credit with the Prince. They had nothing to oppoſe to his captious ſophiſms, except the maxims of a blind and unenquiring faith, which either irritated him or excited his ridicule. He ſaw through them too eaſily, and his ſuperior reaſon ſoon ſilenced thoſe weak defenders of the good cauſe, which will be clearly evinced from an inſtance that I ſhall introduce in the ſequel. The others, who, ſubſequent to this, poſſeſſed themſelves of his confidence, were much more occupied in plunging him deeper into it. When I returned to Venice in the following year, a change had taken place in every thing.

The

The influence of this new philoſophy ſoon ſhewed itſelf in the Prince's conduct. The more he openly purſued pleaſure, and formed new friendſhips, the more did he deſert his old ones. He pleaſed me leſs and leſs every day; we ſaw each other ſeldom, and indeed he was ſeldom to be found. He had launched out into the torrent of the great world. His threſhold was never clear when he was at home. One amuſement introduced another, one banquet another, and one pleaſure was ſucceeded by a ſecond. He was the beauty whom every one adored—the king and idol of every circle. As often as he reflected on the former quietneſs of his retired life, amidſt the buſtle of the world, ſo often did he find more reaſon for aſtoniſhment. Every thing met his wiſhes. Whatever he uttered was admirable, and when he remained ſilent it was committing a robbery upon the company. They underſtood the art of almoſt baniſhing reflection from his ſoul by an agreeable thoughtleſſneſs, and through a delicate aſſiſtance to overwhelm him with it.

This happineſs, which accompanied him every where, and this univerſal ſucceſs, raiſed him indeed too much in his own ideas, becauſe it gave him reliance upon and confidence in himſelf.

The high opinion which he thence acquired of his own worth, made him credit the exceſſive and almoſt idolatrous adoration that was paid to his underſtanding; which, without this augmented and ſomewhat juſt ſelf-complacency, muſt have neceſſarily recalled him

him to his ſenſes. For the preſent, however, this univerſal voice was only the confirmation of that which his complacent vanity whiſpered to him in private—a tribute which he was entitled to by right. He would have infallibly diſengaged himſelf from this ſnare, had they allowed him to take breath—had they granted him a moment of uninterrupted leiſure for comparing his real merit with the picture that was exhibited to him in this ſeducing mirror; but his exiſtence was a continued ſtate of intoxication, of a ſtaggering dizzineſs. The higher he had been elevated, the more difficulty had he to ſupport himſelf in his elevation. This inceſſant exertion ſlowly undermined him—reſt had forſaken even his ſlumbers. They had diſcovered his weakneſs, and turned to good account the paſſion which they had kindled in his breaſt.

His worthy attendants ſoon ſuffered for the *ſpirit* of their lord. That anxious ſenſibility, thoſe glorious truths which his heart once embraced with the greateſt enthuſiaſm, now began to be the objects of his ridicule. He revenged himſelf on the great truths of religion for the oppreſſion which he had ſo long ſuffered from miſconception. But, ſince from too true a voice his heart combated the intoxication of his head, there was more of acrimony than of humour in his jokes. His diſpoſition began to alter, and caprice to make its appearance. The moſt beautiful ornament of his character, his moderation, vaniſhed—paraſites had poiſoned his excellent heart. That tender delicacy of addreſs which

frequently

frequently made his attendants forget that he was their lord, was now obliged not ſeldom to give place to a deciſive and deſpotic tone, that made the more ſenſible impreſſion, becauſe it was not founded upon the external diſtinction of birth, for the want of which they could have more eaſily conſoled themſelves, and which he himſelf eſteemed leſs; but upon an injurious eſtimation of his own individual merit; ſince, when at home, he was attacked by reflections that ſeldom made their appearance in the buſtle of company; his own people ſeldom beheld him otherwiſe than gloomy, peeviſh, and unhappy, whilſt a forced vivacity made him the ſoul of every circle. With the ſincereſt ſorrow did we behold him treading this dangerous path. In the tumult in which he was involved, the feeble voice of friendſhip was no longer heard, and he was yet too much intoxicated to underſtand it.

Juſt at the beginning of this epoch an affair of the greateſt conſequence required my preſence in the court of my ſovereign, and which I dared not poſtpone even for the deareſt intereſts of friendſhip. An inviſible hand, which I did not diſcover till long after that period, had contrived to derange my affairs there, and to ſpread reports which I was obliged to haſten to contradict by my preſence. My abſence from the Prince was as painful to me as it was pleaſing to him. The ties which united us had now been ſevered for ſome time; but his fate had awakened all my anxiety: I on that account made the Baron de F... promiſe

miſe to inform me in his letters of every event, which he has done in the moſt conſcientious manner. As I was now for a conſiderable time no longer an eye-witneſs of theſe events, it will be allowable for me to introduce the Baron de F... in my ſtead, and to fill up the gap in my narrative by the contents of his letters, notwithſtanding that the repreſentation of my friend F... is not always that which I ſhould have given. I would not, however, alter any of his expreſſions, by which the reader will be enabled to diſcover the truth with very little trouble.

LETTER

LETTER I.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

I THANK you, my beloved friend, that you have given me permiſſion to continue with you, even in your abſence, the converſation of friendſhip, which, during your ſtay here was my greateſt pleaſure. There is not any perſon here with whom I could venture to converſe, as you are well aware, on account of private tranſactions; and, independent of that, I deſpiſe the character of the people. Since the Prince became a member of their ſociety, and from the moment that you were torn from us, I have been friendleſs in the midſt of this populous city.

Z... takes it in an eaſier manner; for, encircled by the fair ones at Venice, he learns to forget the ſorrows which he is obliged to ſhare with me when at home. And why ſhould he perplex himſelf? He deſires nothing from the Prince but that which a maſter would beſtow; but I, you know, place him nearer to my heart, and think I can never be too ſolicitous about his welfare and happineſs; and, indeed, I have reaſon for it. I have now lived with him ſixteen years, and exiſt only for

for him. At the age of nine years I entered into his ſervice, and ſince that time I have never been ſeparated from him. I have grown up under his patronage, ſhared with him his pleaſures and misfortunes, and time has converted reſpect into a ſincere attachment. Until now I looked upon him as my friend and brother; we baſked in the ſun-beam of happineſs, uninterrupted by the clouds of miſery.

Since you have left us, conſiderable alterations have taken place. The Prince .. de ... arrived here laſt week with a great retinue, and has corrupted our circle of acquaintance with ideas of a tumultuous life. As he and our Prince are ſo nearly related, and live at preſent upon good terms, I ſuſpect they will not ſeparate from one another during his ſtay here, which will laſt, as I have heard, till the Aſcenſion. His debut has already attracted notice; and for ten days the Prince has been in the midſt of gaiety. The ſtile in which the Prince ... de ... has begun his career may be juſtified upon the ground that his ſtay here will not be long; but the firſt part of the buſineſs is, that he has induced our Prince to partake of thoſe inſidious pleaſures, knowing that he could not eaſily deny him his requeſt, on account of the peculiar connection which exiſts between their houſes; added to this, in a few weeks we muſt depart from Venice, when he will be obliged to abandon this extraordinary and inſufferable mockery of happineſs, and which, perhaps, may make a ſerious impreſſion on his mind.

The Prince ... de ..., it is reported, is

here on the buſineſs of the order of .... That he has taken advantage of all the acquaintances of our Prince you may eaſily imagine. He was received into the Bucentauro with great ſplendor, and pleaſed himſelf with the idea that he was characterized as a wit, and one of great ſpirit; and he has called himſelf in his correſpondences (which he maintains in all parts of the world) the *philoſophical Prince*. I know not whether you have ever had the fortune to ſee him perſonally. He diſplays a promiſing exterior, piercing eyes, and a countenance full of expreſſion. Polite, and unaffected, he entertains (pardon me this expreſſion) a princely reſpect for the feelings of his inferiors, but at the ſame time puts great confidence in himſelf. Who could refuſe to pay adoration to ſo princely a character? and how ſuch a ſolitary Prince as ours will appear in oppoſition to ſuch dazzling accompliſhments, time itſelf muſt diſcover.

In the arrangement of our affairs, many and great changes have taken place. We poſſeſs a new and magnificent houſe oppoſite the new Procuracy, becauſe the lodgings at the Moor Hotel were too ſmall for the Prince.

Our houſehold has been augmented by twelve perſons. Pages, moors, body-guards, &c. grace our retinue. You complained during your ſtay here of extravagance; you ſhould be here now to witneſs the preſent ſyſtem.

Our internal arrangements are ſtill the ſame; only that the Prince, who no longer reſpects the advice of thoſe he once loved, is become more

more reſerved and cold towards us, and that we very ſeldom ſee him or are in his company, except in the hours employed in dreſſing and undreſſing him. Under the pretext that we ſpeak the French language very bad, and the Italian not at all, he excludes us from his preſence, which would not affect me in any great degree, but that I believe, to ſpeak the truth, he is aſhamed of us; and that circumſtance diſpleaſes me, becauſe I am confident we have not deſerved ſuch treatment.

Of all our people (as you wiſh to know the minutiæ) he ſeems moſt attached to Biondello, whom he took into his ſervice, as you muſt remember, when he could not diſcover the retreat of his former ſervant from Bremen, and who has become, by this new manner of life, quite a neceſſary being. This man knows how every thing is going on at Venice, and he employs his time to ſome purpoſe. He is as if he had a thouſand eyes and a thouſand hands to ſet in motion at once. He contrives all plans, and gains the greater part of his knowledge, as he ſays, by the help of the gondoliers; for that reaſon, he has become a great acquiſition to the Prince. He makes him acquainted with every new face whom the Prince has met in his ſocieties; and the ſecret information which he gives his Highneſs has always been found correct. Beſide this, he reads and writes the Italian and French in an excellent ſtyle, by which means he has already become the Prince's ſecretary. I muſt relate to you a trait of fidelity in him, which is indeed very rare to be found in men of his ſtation.

Not long ago a merchant of great conſequence from Rimini begged to be admitted to the Prince. The matter concerned a particular complaint againſt Biondello. The Procurator, his former maſter, who muſt have been an odd fellow, had for ſome time lived upon bad terms with his relations. Biondello poſſeſſed his confidence, and to him he entruſted all his ſecrets. As he was upon his death-bed, he made him ſwear never to diſcloſe them to any one, that his relations might not be benefited by them, and gave him, as a reward, a great legacy.

When the will was opened, and his papers inſpected, there were found conſiderable numbers of blanks, to which Biondello alone could furniſh the key. He denied that he knew any thing of the matter, gave up to the relations his legacy, and perſevered in his fidelity to the injunctions of his deceaſed maſter. Great offers were made to him by the relations, but all to no purpoſe; at laſt he eluded their threats of forcing him to confeſſion, by entering into the ſervice of the Prince.

This merchant, who was the heir at law, addreſſed himſelf to the Prince, and made ſtill greater offers to Biondello if he would diſcover the ſecret—but it was all in vain. The Prince interfered, but he remained firm. He confeſſed however to his Highneſs, that ſecrets of great importance were confided to him, and he did not deny that the deceaſed might have acted with too much ſeverity towards his relations; but he added, "he was my good maſter and benefactor, and with the firmeſt

firmeſt confidence in my ſincerity he died. I was the only friend he left in the world—as ſuch I will never betray my truſt, nor act in contradiction to his dying requeſt." In the mean time he gave a hint, that a diſcovery would not add to the honour of his deceaſed maſter. Was not ſuch conduct worthy to be imitated? You may eaſily imagine that the Prince did not inſiſt upon his violating his vow of fidelity. This extraordinary attachment which he ſhewed for the deceaſed, gained him the moſt unlimited confidence of his royal maſter.

Happineſs attend you, my dear friend. I look back upon our former manner of life with ſecret pleaſure, to which you have contributed in a high degree. I fear we ſhall never more enjoy thoſe tranquil hours at Venice which we were wont formerly to do, and am much miſtaken if the Prince is not of the ſame way of thinking. The element in which he lives at preſent is not that in which he can be happy in future, or an experience of ſixteen years deceives me. Farewel!

LETTER

LETTER II.

BARON F. . . . TO THE COUNT O. . . .

MAY 18.

I HAD no idea that our ſtay at Venice would prove ſo ſatisfactory as it has done. He has ſaved the life of a man—I am reconciled to him.

The Prince not long ago ſuffered himſelf to be carried home in a chair from the Bucentauro; and two footmen, with Biondello, conducted him. I know not how it happened, but the chair, which had been hired in haſte, broke, and the Prince was obliged to walk on foot the remainder of the way. Biondello went before. The way lay through ſeveral dark ſtreets; and as it was not far from day-break, ſome of the lamps burnt but faintly, while the others were totally extinguiſhed. They had been walking a quarter of an hour, when Biondello diſcovered that he had taken the wrong road. The ſimilarity of the bridges had deceived him, and inſtead of croſſing that of St. Mark, they found themſelves in *Seſtiere* of *Raſtello*. It was in one of the bye ſtreets, and not a ſoul ſtirring near the ſpot. They were obliged to turn back to gain, as the beſt way, one of the principal ſtreets. They had walked

walked but a few ſteps, when in an adjoining ſtreet they diſtinctly heard the cry of "Murder!" The Prince, unarmed as he was, ſnatched from one of the ſervants a ſtick, and with his uſual courage, which you have often witneſſed, ran towards the place whence the voice iſſued. Three ruffian-like fellows were juſt on the point of vanquiſhing a perſon, who, with his ſervant, was defending himſelf, apparently overcome by fatigue, when the Prince appeared, and prevented the villains from murdering him. His voice, and that of his ſervants, ſtartled the murderers, who did not expect in ſuch a diſmal place to meet with any interruption.

They immediately left their man, after ſeveral ſlight ſtabs with their daggers, and took flight. Fainting with loſs of blood, the wounded man ſunk into the arms of the Prince: his conductors then told him, that he had ſaved the life of the Marquis of Civitella, the nephew of the Cardinal A. . . i. As the Marquis's wounds bled very much, Biondello performed as well as he was able the office of ſurgeon, and the Prince immediately ſaw him taken to the palace of his uncle, which was not far diſtant from the ſpot. This done, he left the houſe, without diſcovering his rank. But through the means of a footman, who was acquainted with Biondello, he was betrayed. The following morning the Cardinal appeared, an old acquaintance from the Bucentauro. The viſit laſted an hour; the Cardinal was in great emotion, and when they ſeparated tears ſtood in his eyes; the Prince alſo appeared extremely

extremely concerned. The ſame evening his Highneſs paid a viſit to the wounded man, whom the Surgeon affirmed would ſoon recover. The cloak in which he was wrapped up had in ſome meaſure ſhielded him from the force with which the ſtabs were given.—Since that accident, not a day has paſſed over without the Prince paying a viſit to the Cardinal, or receiving one from him; and a great friendſhip begins to exiſt between him and that family.

The Cardinal is a venerable man of ſixty, with a majeſtic appearance, but full of gaiety and good health. They think him one of the richeſt prelates in the whole Republic. Of his enormous fortune he himſelf is the treaſurer, and, although a prudent œconomiſt, he does not deſpiſe the pleaſures of the world. This nephew, who is his only heir, does not always poſſeſs the good opinion of his uncle. Although the old man is not an enemy to youthful pleaſures, the conduct of the nephew appears to exhauſt every principle of tolerance in his relation. His diſſipated principles, and his licentious manner of living, ſupported by every vice that is countenanced by the groſſeſt ſenſuality, make him the terror of all fathers, and the curſe of domeſtic happineſs. This laſt attack, it is ſaid, was owing to an intrigue which he had concerted with the wife of the *** ambaſſador: not to mention other troubles, from which only the power and money of the Cardinal could extricate him. But for this the Cardinal might be the moſt enviable man in all Italy, becauſe he poſſeſſes every thing

thing that can make life worth preſerving. But his nephew's enormities render the gifts of fortune ſuperfluous; and the continual fear of not being able to find an heir worthy of his property, diminiſhes the comfort that his Eminence would otherwiſe enjoy in ſuch a ſtate of affluence.

I have this information from Biondello. In this man the Prince has acquired a treaſure. Every day he makes himſelf more worthy of eſtimation, and we almoſt hourly diſcover in him ſome new talent. Not long ago the Prince, being over-fatigued, could not ſleep. The night-lamp was extinguiſhed, and no bell could waken the valet de chambre, who it was ſoon found was gone to ſleep out of the houſe with an opera girl. The Prince had the reſolution to get up himſelf, to call one of his people. He had not gone far, when he heard at a little diſtance from him enchanting muſic. He followed the ſound, and found Biondello playing upon the flute in his room, with his fellow-ſervants round him. He commanded him to proceed. With admirable ſkill Biondello repeated the ſame air, with the moſt delightful variations and niceties of a virtuoſo. The Prince, who is a connoiſſeur in muſic, declared, that he might play with great confidence in the beſt concert.

"I muſt diſmiſs this man," ſaid he to me the following morning; "I am unable to recompence him according to his merits."

Biondello, who heard theſe words, came towards him.

" Gracious Sir, if you do that, you deprive me of my beſt reward."

" You are worthy of ſomething better than being a ſervant," ſaid my maſter. " I will not any longer be a bar to the improvement of your fortune."

" Do not preſs upon me any other fortune, gracious Sir, than that which I have choſen myſelf."

" And to neglect ſuch a talent—No! I muſt not conſent."

" Then permit me, your Highneſs, to exerciſe it every now and then in your preſence."

To this propoſition the Prince immediately conſented, and Biondello obtained an apartment adjoining the ſleeping-room of his maſter, where he lulled him to repoſe by ſoft and delicate airs, and awoke him in the morning with the ſame melody. The Prince inſiſted upon increaſing his ſalary, which he did not accept without requeſting his Highneſs to permit him to lie it lie in his hands, as a capital which perhaps at ſome future period might be of ſervice to him. The Prince expected that he would ſoon apply for his money, or ſome other favour; and whatever it might have been the Prince would not have denied it. Farewell, my beſt of friends. I expect with impatience news from R***n.

LETTER

LETTER III.

THE BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

JUNE 4.

THE Marquis Civitella, who is now entirely recovered from his wounds, was introduced last week by the Cardinal his uncle to the Prince, and ſince that day he has followed him like his ſhadow. Biondello, I ſuſpect, has not told me the truth concerning the character of the Marquis, at leaſt he is gone too far in his deſcription.

He is to all appearance a moſt amiable man, and irreſiſtible in company. It is not poſſible to be angry with him; the firſt ſight of him has conquered all my prejudices. Figure to your mind a man of the moſt enchanting perſon, a face full of uncommon expreſſion, an inſinuating tone of voice, poſſeſſed of the moſt fluent eloquence, united with all the advantages of the beſt education. He has none of that low deſpicable pride which in general ſo much diſgraces the nobility here.

Every action teems with the energy of youth, benevolence, and warm ſenſibility. They muſt, in relating his extravagancies, have gone far beyond the truth; I never ſaw a more perfect contraſt than his conduct is to that which is repreſented

repreſented of him. If he be really ſo licentious as Biondello aſſerted, then he is a Siren, whom no creature is able to reſiſt.

Towards me he acted with unreſerved confidence. He confeſſed to me with the moſt agreeable frankneſs, that he did not ſtand in high favour with his uncle the Cardinal, and perhaps he might have deſerved his cenſure. But he was ſeriouſly reſolved to amend his life; and he declared the merit of his reformation would entirely fall to the Prince: In the meantime he hoped, through his interference, to be entirely reconciled with his uncle, becauſe he had the higheſt confidence of the Prince's character. He had wanted till now a friend and inſtructor, and he hoped to acquire both in the perſon of the Prince.

The Prince exerciſes all the authority of a tutor over him, and guides him with the paternal watchfulneſs and ſolicitude of a Mentor. This confidence alſo gives him certain advantages, and he knows perfectly well how to make them valuable. He ſeldom quits the preſence of the Prince, he partakes of all his pleaſures, and has lately become one of the Bucentauro; and that is lucky for him,—he was before too young. Wherever he goes with the Prince, he charms the ſociety by his accompliſhments, which he is well ſkilled in turning to the greateſt advantage. Nobody, they ſay, ever could ſucceed in reclaiming him; and ſhould the Prince accompliſh this Herculean labour, he will deſerve the higheſt encomiums for his conduct. But I fear very much the tide will turn, and Mentor become

the

the pupil of his ſcholar; to this end all the preſent circumſtances ſeem to lead.

The Prince * * d * * is departed, and indeed to the greateſt ſatisfaction of all here, my maſter not excepted. What I foretold, dear O . . . ., is thus happily accompliſhed. Two ſuch oppoſite characters could not long, I was confident, maintain a good underſtanding with each other. The Prince . . d . . . was not long at Venice before I obſerved a ſchiſm in their friendſhip; from which circumſtance the Prince was in danger of loſing all his former admirers. Wherever he went, he found this rival in his way, who poſſeſſed the artful quality of turning every advantage in which our Prince was deficient to good account. He had a variety of little manœvres at his command, which our maſter, from a noble ſenſibility, diſdained. From ſuch circumſtances, in a ſhort time, he procured a number of friends of his own deſcription to follow his advice and participate in his ſchemes *. It would have been better for the Prince if he had not conſidered him as an enemy; but had looked forward to the time when this would have been the caſe. But now he has advanced too far into the ſtream, to reach the ſhore without difficulty. Although theſe trifles, by habit, have acquired an aſcendancy

* In the unfavourable opinion which the Baron F.... forms of our Prince, in ſeveral parts of the firſt letter, every one who has the happineſs to know him intimately, will think with me, that he went beyond the limits of his judgment, and he will aſcribe it to the prejudice of this young obſerver.

dancy over him, and probably he may deſpiſe them in his heart; yet his pride will not permit him to renounce them; naturally ſuppoſing that his ſubmiſſion will appear like conviction, rather than a free diſpoſition to confeſs his abhorrence of them. The ſatirical manner in which they always converſed, and the ſpirit of rivalſhip that influenced his opponent, have alſo ſeized upon him. And to preſerve his conqueſts, and to maintain himſelf upon the dangerous principles to which the opinion of the world had rivetted him, he is believed to augment the allurements of faſhion and gaiety, and this cannot be acquired but by ſplendor equal to his rank; on that account he has been involved in perpetual banquets, concerts, and gaming. And this ſtrange madneſs diffuſed itſelf through their houſholds, although they are in general more watchful of the principle of honour, than their maſters; he is therefore obliged to gain the favour of his people by liberality. A long chain of poverty is the unavoidable conſequence of this unhappy connection.

We have got rid at laſt of the rival; but what he has ſubverted cannot ſo eaſily be reſtored. The treaſure of the Prince is exhauſted; all that he had ſaved by a ſtrict œconomy is gone; we muſt haſten from Venice, or elſe be involved in debt, which, till now, he has carefully avoided. Our departure is certainly to take place as ſoon as freſh remittances arrive.

The many unneceſſary expences he has incurred would be of little conſequence if his happineſs

pineſs increaſed in proportion; but he was never leſs happy than at preſent! He feels that he is not now what he formerly was—he is diſſatisfied with himſelf, and ruſhes into new diſſipation, to avoid the piercing conſequences of reflection. One new acquaintance follows another, which is fatal to his reformation. I know not what may happen, but we muſt depart—We have no other ſafety—But, dear friend, as yet I have not received a ſingle line from you — how muſt I interpret this long ſilence?

LETTER

LETTER IV.

THE BARON F... TO THE COUNT D'O...

JUNE 12.

RECEIVE my thanks, dear friend, for that token of your remembrance which young B...hl brought over to me. But what do you ſay about letters which I was to have received? I have not received any letters from you till now; not even a line. What a circuit muſt thoſe which I now receive have taken! For the future, dear O... when you honour me with your letters, ſend them by Trient, and under cover to my maſter.

We have at length been obliged, my dear friend, to take that ſtep which we had hitherto ſo fortunately avoided. The notes were kept back, even at this preſſing emergency—for the firſt time were they kept back; we were abſolutely compelled to have recourſe to a uſurer, and the Prince willingly pays ſomething more for the ſake of ſecreſy. The worſt of theſe unpleaſant circumſtances is, that it delays our departure.

Such was the ſtate of our affairs when the Prince and I came to an explanation. The whole of the buſineſs had paſſed through

Biondello's

Biondello's hands, and the Jew was preſent before I had the leaſt ſuſpicion of it.

I was grieved to the heart to ſee the Prince reduced to ſuch an extremity, and it revived in me all the recollection of the paſt, and all my fears for the future; ſo that I certainly might have looked a little melancholy and gloomy when the uſurer left the room. The Prince, to whom the preceding ſcene had doubtleſs been by no means pleaſing, walked backwards and forwards with uneaſineſs. The rouleaus of gold were yet lying on the table —I was ſtanding at the window, and employing myſelf in counting the windows in the *Procuratié*—there was a long ſilence. At length he addreſſed himſelf to me—

"F..." he began, "I cannot bear any diſmal faces about me."

I was ſilent.

"Why do you not anſwer me?—Do I not ſee that it will break your heart not to pour forth your vexation? I command you to ſpeak. You may, perhaps, wonder what extraordinary affairs I am concealing from you."

"If I am gloomy, gracious Sir," replied I, "it is only becauſe I do not ſee you in better ſpirits."

"I know," continued he, "that you think I have acted wrongly for ſome time paſt—that every ſtep which I have taken has diſpleaſed you—that——What does the Count d'O... ſay in his letters?"

"The Count d'O... has not written to me."

"Not written? Why will you not confeſs the

the truth? You mutually lay open your hearts to each other—you and the Count. I know it very well: however, you need not conceal it from me. I ſhall not introduce myſelf into your ſecrets."

"The Count d'O..." replied I, "has only anſwered the firſt of three letters which I wrote to him."

"I was wrong," continued he; "is it not ſo? (taking up one of the rouleaus) I ſhould not have acted thus."

"I ſee very plainly that the ſtep was *neceſſary*."

"I ought not to have involved myſelf in ſuch a neceſſity."

I remained ſilent.

"Indeed, I ought not to have ventured beyond that point in the completion of my wiſhes, ſo as to have become a greybeard as ſoon as I became a man. Becauſe I once ſtep forth from the dreary uniformity of my former life, and look around me to ſee whether there will ſpring up no ſource of enjoyment for me in any other quarter; becauſe I——"

"If it were only a trial, gracious Sir, I have nothing more to ſay; for the experience which it has procured for you would not be purchaſed at too dear a rate, though it coſt three times as much. It hurts me, I muſt confeſs, that the opinion of the world ſhould have to decide upon the queſtion, How you can be happy?"

"Fortunate man, who can thus deſpiſe the opinion of the world! I am its creature, and muſt be its ſlave. What elſe are we governed by,

by, but opinion? Opinion is every thing with us princes. Opinion is our nurſe and educatreſs in infancy, our legiſlatreſs and miſtreſs in our manly years, and our crutch in old age. Take from us what we receive from opinion, and the meaneſt of the humbleſt claſs is better off than we are; for his fate has taught him a philoſophy which enables him to bear it. A prince who laughs at opinion, is his own deſtroyer, like the prieſt who denies the exiſtence of a god."

"And yet, gracious Prince——"

"I know what you are going to ſay. I can paſs the boundary of the circle which my birth has drawn around me.—But can I eradicate from my memory all the fooliſh ideas which education and early habit have planted in it, and which a hundred thouſand of you fools have ever been impreſſing with more and more firmneſs? Every one wiſhes to be what he is to *perfection*, and our exiſtence conſiſts, in ſhort, in *appearing happy*. If we cannot be ſo according to your mode, ſhall we not for that reaſon be ſo at all? If we can no longer taſte of joy immediately from its uncorrupted ſource, ſhall we not deceive ourſelves with an artificial enjoyment, ſhall we not ſnatch a ſmall compenſation even from the very hand which robs us?"

"You once found theſe joys in your own heart."

"But if I do not any longer find them there!—Oh, how came we to fall upon this ſubject? Why muſt you awake in me the recollection of that, even if I have had recourſe

to-

to this tumult of voluptuouſneſs, in order to ſtifle a voice which renders my life miſerable —in order to lull to reſt this inquiſitive reaſon which moves to and fro in my brain like a ſharp ſickle, and with every new ſtroke cuts off a new branch of my happineſs?"

"Beſt of princes."

He got up, and walked backwards and forwards in the room with unuſual agitation, and ſoon after left it.

Pardon, dear O... this tedious letter. You wiſh to know every trifle which concerns the Prince, and I may juſtly rank his moral philoſophy among them. I know that the ſtate of his mind is important to you, and his actions, I am aware, are on that account alſo important to you. I have for that reaſon faithfully tranſcribed all that I recollected of this converſation. I ſhall at a future period inform you of a new occurrence, which you could hardly have been led to expect from a dialogue like that of to-day. Farewell.

LETTER

LETTER V.

BARON F. . . TO THE COUNT O. . .

JULY 1.

AS the time for our departure from Venice approaches, we are determined to employ this week in an examination of all the remarkable pictures and buildings, which is generally delayed to the laſt moment. They praiſed highly the work * of Paul Veroneſe, which was to be ſeen in a Benedictine convent upon the Iſland St. George. You muſt not expect from me a minute deſcription of this beautiful maſter-piece, from the contemplation of which I derived the moſt ſatisfactory pleaſure; but it was a ſight worthy to be enjoyed longer. We ſhould have had as many hours as minutes to ſtudy a painting of a hundred and twenty figures, which is thirty feet in breadth. It is impoſſible to obſerve the beauties which the artiſt has diſplayed in it, by juſt glancing at the whole. It is however a pity, that ſo valuable a work, which ought to adorn a place of more utility, ſhould be buried within the walls of a convent for a few monks to gaze at. The church of this convent deſerves alſo the attention

* The marriage at Cana.

attention of the connoiſſeur: it is one of the handſomeſt in the city.

Towards evening we ſet off for the *Giudecca*, to ſpend a few hours in the charming gardens that ſurround it. The ſociety, which was not numerous, ſeparated very ſoon; and Civitella, who had been the whole day ſeeking for an opportunity to ſpeak to me in private, thus addreſſed me—

"You are the friend of the Prince, and poſſeſs his confidence, as I know from good authority. When I went to-day to his hotel, I met a man upon the ſtairs, and immediately gueſſed the buſineſs he had been upon. I found the Prince, as I entered his apartments, thoughtful and dejected."

I was about to interrupt him.

"You cannot deny it," he continued. "I know the man, for I took very particular notice of his perſon. Is it poſſible that the Prince, who has friends at Venice, to whom he is as dear as life, ſhould in a caſe of neceſſity make uſe of ſuch a wretch? Be ſincere, baron!—Is the Prince embarraſſed in his circumſtances? You may endeavour to hide the truth, but it is in vain. What I cannot learn from you I will obtain from a man to whom every ſecret is a prize, and ready to be ſold."

"What, Marquis!"

"Pardon me. I muſt endure the charge of being indiſcreet, to avoid the imputation of ingratitude. The Prince ſaved my life, and what goes far beyond that, he has inſtilled into my mind the principles of virtue. If I ſee the Prince act in a manner which muſt be expenſive

expenſive to him, and beneath his dignity; if it is in my power to aſſiſt him, I never can reſiſt it."

"The Prince is not now in any embarraſſment. Several remittances, which we expected from Trient, are, indeed, unexpectedly detained; but accidentally perhaps, or from the idea that his departure is near at hand. This is now fixed upon; and till then—"

He ſhook his head. "Do not deceive me," ſaid he. "I mean not by doing this to diminiſh the obligation I owe the Prince. No, not all the riches of my uncle could repay him. I am anxious to free him from one unhappy moment. My uncle poſſeſſes a large fortune, and which I can diſpoſe of as if it were my own. I conſider it a fortunate circumſtance, that the moment is arrived when I can be uſeful to the Prince. "I know," he continued, "with what delicacy the Prince will treat my offer;—but on the other hand, I hope he will lay aſide his prejudices, and ſuffer me to enjoy the ſatisfaction of having in ſome meaſure returned the obligation I owe to him."

He continued to urge his requeſt till I had promiſed him that I would do all in my power to make the Prince accept his offer. But I knew his character, and for that reaſon I deſpaired of ſucceſs. He appeared ſatisfied however with my promiſe, though he confeſſed that it would give him great uneaſineſs if the Prince conſidered him in the light of a ſtranger.

Loſt in converſation, we had wandered from the company, and were juſt about to return, when Z ** approached us.

"I thought

"I thought the Prince had been with you?" —ſaid he. "Is he not here?"

We immediately returned with him, thinking to find the Prince with the other part of the company.

"The ſociety is together, but the Prince is not among them," ſaid I; "I really do not know how it happened that we miſſed him."

Here Civitella ſuggeſted, that he might poſſibly have viſited the adjoining church, which he had a little time before remarked for its beauty. We immediately went to ſeek for him there. As we approached it, we diſcovered Biondello waiting at the entrance. When we came nearer, we obſerved the Prince ruſh haſtily out from a ſmall door; the agitation of his mind was impreſſed upon his countenance. He called Biondello to him, and ſeemed to inſtruct him in the execution of ſome commiſſion of conſequence; his eyes were conſtantly directed to the gate, which remained open. Biondello haſtened into the church. The Prince, without perceiving us, puſhed through the crowd, and went back to the ſociety.

It was reſolved to ſup in an open pavillion, and the Marquis, without our knowledge, had procured ſome muſicians to entertain us with a concert. It was quite ſelect; but there was among the performers a young lady who ſung delightfully, and whoſe voice did not more enchant us than the beauty of her perſon. Nothing ſeemed to make an impreſſion upon the Prince; he ſpoke little, and anſwered our queſtions confuſedly; his eyes were conſtantly rivetted upon the ſpot from whence Biondello

was

was to come; and it was visible to all, that something of consequence affected his mind. Civitella asked him how he liked the church; he could not give any description of it. He spoke of several remarkable pictures, which were highly esteemed; but he had not observed them. We perceived that our questions were unpleasant to him, and therefore we discontinued our enquiries. One hour after another passed away, and Biondello did not arrive. The impatience of the Prince could no longer be concealed; he went from supper very early, and walked alone up and down the aisles of the church with agitated steps. No person could imagine what had happened to him. I did not venture to ask him the reason for such a sudden change in his dispositon, as I could not now treat him with that familiarity I did formerly. With so much more impatience, therefore, did I expect the arrival of Biendello, that he might explain to me the mystery.

It was past ten o'clock before he came back. The accounts which he brought to the Prince did not contribute to dissipate the gloom of melancholy. He returned to the pavilion apparently uneasy and dissatisfied. Soon after the boat was ordered, and we went home.

I could not find a single opportunity the whole evening to speak with Biondello; and I was at last obliged to go to bed without being able to satisfy my curiosity. The Prince dismissed us very early; but a thousand unpleasant reflections which tormented me kept me awake. I could distinctly hear the Prince

walking up and down his chamber till a late hour; at laſt I dropt into a doſe, but was ſoon rouſed from ſlumber by a perſon who appeared at my bedſide with a lamp in his hand. When I looked up, I diſcovered it to be the Prince. He could not cloſe his eyes, he ſaid, and begged of me to paſs the night with him. I would have riſen and dreſt myſelf, but he commanded me to remain as I was, and ſeated himſelf on my bed.

" An extraordinary circumſtance has happened to me to-day," ſaid he, " and the impreſſion it has made upon my mind will never be effaced. I went, as you muſt recollect, to ſee *** church, to which Civitella directed my attention, and which had at a diſtance excited my curioſity. As neither you nor he were preſent, I went in alone, and bid Biondello wait for me at the entrance. The church was quite dark and ſolitary. The aiſles were cold and damp; I felt a ſudden chillneſs ſteal all over me; I ſaw myſelf alone amidſt the dead, in a ſanctuary where a ſolemn ſilence, as in the grave, reigned in every part. I placed myſelf in the middle of the dome, and gave my ſoul up to contemplation. Soon however the gothic beauty of the building arreſted my attention. It appeared, as I examined it, more and more delightful. It called forth the powers of awful meditation. The evening bell was tolling; its hollow ſound, as I heard it faintly in the aiſle, overpowered me with an unuſual melancholy. Some altar-pieces at a diſtance attracted my attention. I went nearer to view them diſtinctly; unperceived, I had wandered

wandered through the aiſles of the church, and was approaching the end, when, by accident, I went round a pillar up a flight of ſteps, which lead into a ſide chapel, decorated with ſeveral little altars and ſtatues of ſaints. As ſoon as I entered the chapel I heard a ſoft whiſpering, turned towards the ſpot from whence I heard the voice, and about two ſteps from me diſcovered a female figure. Fright almoſt overpowered me; but after a few moments had elapſed I recovered, and contemplated an object which I cannot deſcribe with juſtice."

"And does your Highneſs know for certain that it was alive—that it was not fancy—a picture of the brain?"

"Hear farther—It was a lady. Until that moment I had never regarded the ſex!—The rays of the ſetting ſun, that illumed the chapel, enabled me to obſerve that ſhe was in the act of praying before an altar—Nature ſeemed to have laviſhed all her perfections on her lovely form. She was elegantly dreſſed in black ſilk, which ſpread around her in large folds like a Spaniſh rope; her long light-coloured hair burſt from under the veil, and flowed in charming diſorder down her back; one of her hands touched the crucifix, as ſhe reſted her head upon the other. But how ſhall I find words to deſcribe to you the angelic beauty of her countenance! The ſun-beams played upon it, and heightened the divine expreſſion that ſeemed to glow in it. Can you call back to your mind the Madona of Florence?—She was the exact copy of the artleſs enchanting beauty

which is ſo irreſiſtibly expreſſed in that picture."

Of the Madona of which the Prince ſpeaks, the caſe is this: Shortly after your departure, the Prince became acquainted with a painter from Florence, who had been ordered to Venice to paint an altar-piece for a church; his name I do not now remember. He brought with him three pictures, which he had executed for the gallery in the Canarian Palace. The ſubjects were a Madona, an Heloiſe, and a Venus in diſhabille. From the exquiſite manner in which they were all painted, it was almoſt impoſſible to decide which was ſuperior in beauty. The prince alone did not heſitate a moment to decide; they were ſcarcely put before him when the Madona attracted his whole attention; in both the others the genius of the painter was admired, but this he ſurveyed with enthuſiaſm. He was ſo enamoured with it, that he could not be perſuaded to quit it. The artiſt, we could perceive by his countenance, enjoyed the judgment of the Prince; he had the wit not to ſeparate the three pictures, and demanded 1500 zequins for them. The Prince offered him half the price for the Madona. The artiſt inſiſted upon his demand, and who knows what might have happened if he had not found a purchaſer for his works? Two hours after, all the three pieces were gone; and we have not ſeen them ſince. This was the picture that the Prince brought to his memory.

"I ſtood," he continued, "in ſilent admiration. She did not obſerve me; ſhe was not diſturbed

disturbed by my arrival; so entirely was she lost in adoration. She prayed to her God and I to her eyes; saints, altars, or burning tapers, had never before reminded me that I was in a sanctuary; I was seized with enthusiasm. Shall I confess to you, that I believed, from that very moment, in the influence of the crucifix she held in her beautiful hand. I read our Saviour's answer in her eyes. Thanks to her charming piety! She painted his true character to me. My ideas wandered with her's through the ways of heaven.

"She rose, and I stepped aside with embarrassment; the noise I made discovered me. The unexpected appearance of a man alarmed her; I was fearful that my boldness might offend her; for as she glanced at me, the beauteous smiles of innocence and virtue played upon her countenance. As she rose from prayer, I was the first happy creature which offered itself to her sight.

"In an adjoining corner of the chapel, I saw an elderly lady rise from her seat, and come towards us. I had not till then perceived her. She was but a few steps distant from me, and no doubt had witnessed all my actions. I was somewhat confused—I cast my eyes as it were involuntarily on the ground, and they rushed by me.

"I looked after her as she passed along the aisle. The beautiful figure was with her—What grace, what majesty appeared in all her steps! She was no longer the being that I first beheld; no, she was possessed of a thousand new charms. I followed at a distance with trembling

trembling ſteps, undetermined whether I ſhould overtake her or not. I waited with impatience to ſee if ſhe would beſtow upon me another look;—for the one ſhe gave me as ſhe paſſed by was loſt upon me.

" With what extreme anxiety did I expect it!

" They ſtopped ſuddenly, but I was not able to ſet a foot forwards. The elderly lady, who perhaps might be her mother, obſerved the diſorder of her hair, and immediately adjuſted it.

" That done, they approached the gate. I doubled my ſteps—ſhe diſappeared by degrees—I could only ſee the ſhadow of her robe as it floated in the air. A flower had fallen from her boſom, ſhe returned in haſte to fetch it—ſhe once more looked back and—after me!—whom elſe could ſhe ſeek in a place ſo ſolitary? She appeared as if I was no longer a ſtranger to her;—but ſhe deſerted me like the flower which ſeemed unworthy to be replaced in her boſom. Dear F*** I am almoſt aſhamed to own to you with what childiſh rapture I interpreted that look—that laſt expreſſive look, which was not perhaps deſigned for me!"

" You may rely upon it, it was."

" It is ſingular," ſaid the Prince, after a long ſilence, " that we ſhould lament the loſs of an object we never ſaw before—but I feel as if I exiſt only for her. That in a ſingle moment man ſhould diſplay two ſuch oppoſite characters? I look back upon the happineſs I received yeſterday morning with all that exquiſite feelings with which we trace the days of childhood.

childhood. This picture lives in my remembrance, and forces me to acknowledge that it is my god!"

"Recollect, gracious Sir," said I, "in what gloomy thoughtfulness your mind was wrapt when this Ideal Divinity appeared to you; the association of ideas alone inflamed your imagination. Quitting the beautiful light of day, and the tumult of the world, you were suddenly surrounded by darkness and silence, impressed with sensations which, as you confessed yourself, tended to impress you with melancholy, whilst the majesty of the structure, and the contemplation of beauty in the works of different artists, aided the train of ideas you were supporting. In the mean time, alone and solitary, you gave yourself up to reflection; in the midst of your meditations you observe the figure of a female, where you did not expect to meet a soul—still more enchanting by a fine form, which was heightened by a favourable illumination of the setting sun—a fortunate situation, and a captivating display of piety—what is more likely than that your disturbed fancy deceived you?"

"Can memory give back impressions it has never received? In my whole country there is nothing that I could justly put in comparison with that picture. Entire and unchanged, as in the moment of beholding it, it lies in my memory; I can think of nothing but that picture—and in vain might you offer me a whole world for it!"

"Gracious Prince, this is love."

"Must it then be by a name that I am to

be

be made happy? Love!—Do not think ſo meanly of my feelings as to accuſe me of that which influences a thouſand feeble ſouls! Who has ever felt what I endure! Such a being as I am never was in exiſtence before! How then can you give my ſenſations a name? It is a new and ſingular ſuffering, originating with her that I adore.—Love! No, from love I am quite ſecure!"

"You ſent Biondello, no doubt, to find out the path your fair unknown purſued, and to get ſome information of her.—What accounts did he bring you back?"

"Biondello has diſcovered nothing. He found her at the church gate. An old well-dreſſed man (who had the appearance of a citizen from this city, and not a ſervant) conducted her to the boat. Some poor peaſants ſmiled upon her as ſhe paſſed them, and ſhe rewarded them with money. By this means one of her hands became viſible; it was ornamented with ſeveral precious ſtones. She ſaid ſomething to her companion which Biondello did not underſtand; he maintained it to be Greek. She had to walk a conſiderable diſtance to the canal. The people began to collect round her; ſo extraordinary a ſight ſurprized all the peaſants. Nobody knew her—but beauty is born a queen. All made way for her in an humble ſubmiſſive manner. She let fall a black veil over her face, and haſtened into the boat. To the extent of the channel of the *Giudecca* Biondello kept the boat in ſight, but could not purſue its courſe farther, owing to the concourſe of people."

"Has

" Has he not taken notice of the waterman ?"

" He endeavoured in vain to find him ; for it was not one of them with whom he is connected. The poor people of whom he enquired could give him no other account, than that the lady for ſeveral weeks paſt had landed on the ſame ſpot on a Sunday evening, when ſhe diſtributed ſome gold pieces amongſt them. They were Dutch ducats, which I diſcovered by one that Biondello had procured."

" A Greek lady of fortune and rank, as it ſhould ſeem by your deſcription. That is quite ſufficient, gracious Sir, to aid us in a diſcovery. But a Greek lady and in a catholic church !"

" Why not ? She may have changed her religion. But there is ſomething in all this that we do not underſtand. Why does ſhe come only once a week ? Why only on a Sunday evening, at an hour when the church is entirely deſerted, as Biondello told me ?—
—Next Sunday evening muſt decide this. But till then, my dear friend, aſſiſt me in the difficult taſk of paſſing away the time ! Days and hours will elapſe in their ordinary courſe, but are of too long duration for a mind like mine."

" And when that day arrives—what is to be done ?"

" What is to be done ? I ſhall ſee her again. I ſhall diſcover who ſhe is, and the place of her reſidence. Why ſhould I be unhappy, when I know how to alleviate my ſufferings ?"

" But our departure from Venice, which is fixed for the beginning of next month ?"

" Could I imagine that Venice contained ſuch a treaſure ! I will not think of my paſt life, but date my exiſtence from this hour."

I thought this a favourable opportunity of keeping my word with the Marquis. I gave the Prince to underſtand, that for him to continue at Venice in the preſent ſtate of our finances, would by no means be proper; and that if he prolonged his ſtay beyond the term, he could not expect that his court would ſupport him. I now diſcovered a ſecret which till then had been unknown to me, that he received ſuccours clandeſtinely from his ſiſter, the reigning Princeſs of ... which ſhe is very willing to increaſe if his court ſhould abandon him. This ſiſter is a pious fanatic, you know, and thinks the great ſavings which ſhe makes at a very œconomical court, cannot be diſpoſed of better than to a brother whoſe character ſhe enthuſiaſtically venerates. I was confident ſometime back, that there exiſted a good underſtanding between them, and many letters had been exchanged ; but as the Prince's own reſources were ſufficient to defray his expences, I never once thought of this ſecret channel. It was now clear that the Prince had expences which were unknown to me ; theſe ſtill remain a ſecret ; and if I may conclude from what I know of his character, they are not of that nature which will diſgrace him. I was certain now that I had found him out. I did not therefore heſitate to make known to him immediately the offer of the Marquis,

Marquis, which, to my great aſtoniſhment, was accepted without any difficulty. He gave me free liberty to conduct the buſineſs with the Marquis in ſuch a manner as I thought beſt, and then ordered me to diſmiſs the uſurer, and write immediately to his ſiſter.

It was day-break when we ſeparated. This event has made me very uneaſy for more reaſons than one, particularly that it compels us to prolong our ſtay at Venice. This ſudden paſſion for the unknown lady I expect will rather be of ſervice to him than otherwiſe. She will perhaps be the means of reclaiming the Prince. I hope it will affect him in the ordinary way with a ſlight illneſs, and ſo eradicate his prejudices.

Farewell, my dear friend. I have written this letter on the ſpur of the moment. The poſt is about to depart. You will receive this letter with the foregoing one on the ſame day.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

JULY 20.

THIS Civitella is one of the moſt ſerviceable men in the world. The Prince had not long left me when a note arrived from the Marquis, in which he politely reminded me of my promiſe. I ſent him immediately a bond, executed by the Prince, for ſix thouſand zechins; in leſs than half an hour it was returned, with an incloſed draught for double the ſum. The Prince accepted it, but inſiſted that the bond ſhould be given in return, which was only for the ſpace of ſix weeks.

This whole week has been ſpent in enquiries after the myſterious Greek lady. Biondello put his machines in motion, but all were fruitleſs. He has indeed found the waterman; but he could learn nothing farther from him, than that he had ſet both the ladies on ſhore upon the Iſland of Murano, where two chairs waited for them. He ſuppoſed her to be an Engliſh lady, becauſe ſhe ſpoke a foreign language, and paid him in gold. He did not know her conductor, but he appeared to him to be a looking-glaſs manufacturer from Murano.

rano. We were now convinced that we had not to ſeek for her in the Guidecca, and that ſhe was probably at home upon the Iſland of Murano; but the misfortune was, that from the deſcription which the Prince gave of her, ſhe could not be known by a third perſon. The impaſſioned frenzy which ſeized him at the moment hindered him from obſerving her minutely. To that to which other people would have principally directed their attention, he was quite blind. After ſuch a deſcription as his, one might have ſought for her in Arioſto or Taſſo with more probability than upon a Venetian iſland. His enquiries muſt be made with the greateſt ſecreſy and precaution, to prevent impeaching the virtue of the lady; and as Biondello was the only perſon beſides the Prince who had ſeen her through the veil, and therefore could know her again, they ſought together for her in all places where it was thought poſſible that ſhe could be. The life of this good-tempered man was this week ſpent in traverſing all the ſtreets of Venice. In the Greek church he made particular enquiries, but all to no purpoſe; and the Prince, although more and more impatient at every diſappointment, was at laſt obliged to comfort himſelf till the next Sunday evening.

His impatience was pitiable. Nothing pleaſed him—nothing excited his attention. His hours were ſpent in anxiety and diſtreſs: he fled from ſociety, but the evil increaſed in ſolitude. He was never more ſurrounded by viſitors than he was this week. His departure had been announced as near at hand—all preſſed

preſſed themſelves upon him. Being obliged to entertain thoſe people, to avoid all ſuſpicion, we contrived to occupy his mind in order that we might diſſipate his melancholy. In this ſituation Civitella hit upon gaming; and to detain the company, he propoſed to ſtake very high. In the mean time he flattered himſelf that he ſhould tempt the Prince to play, which he thought would very ſoon conquer his romantic ideas. This ſcheme, although hazardous, they knew could not injure him, as they had it in their power to deſiſt at any time from playing.

"Cards," ſaid he, "have often prevented me from purſuing follies which I anticipated, and relieved me from reflecting upon thoſe I had committed.

"The tranquillity of mind which a pair of charming eyes deprived me of, I have very often found again at the pharo-table; and women never had half the effect upon my ſpirits as not being enabled to play from poverty."

I conſented, in as far as I thought Civitella might be in the right; but the means which we inſtituted began ſoon to become more dangerous than the evil we endeavoured to deſtroy. The Prince, who thought to make the game attractive by betting very high, found very ſoon no bounds to it. He was quite out of his element. What he did was with apparent indifference, although his actions betrayed impatience and uneaſineſs of mind. You know how indifferent he is about money, and now he became totally inſenſible of its value.

Gold

Gold pieces ran away like water. He loſt almoſt upon every card, becauſe he played without paying any attention. He forfeited large ſums, becauſe he ventured like a deſperate unfortunate man.—Dear O... I communicate this with an aching heart: in four days we had not any of the twelve thouſand zechins.

Do not reproach me. I accuſe myſelf ſufficiently. But could I prevent it? Could I oblige the Prince to liſten to me? Could I do more than remonſtrate with him? I did what laid in my power: ſurely I may ſay, that I am not guilty.

Civitella alſo loſt. I won ſix hundred zechins. The unexampled misfortune of the Prince was obſerved by all, and for that very reaſon he would not abandon the game. Civitella, who likes to ſhew his readineſs to oblige him, lent him immediately the required ſums.

This ſcene is cloſed, but the Prince is indebted to the Marquis twenty-four thouſand zechins. Oh how I long for the ſpare-money of his pious ſiſter! If all Princes acted thus, my dear friend! His Highneſs behaves towards the Marquis as if he had done him the greateſt honour, and thus he plays his part very well.

Civitella ſought to conſole me, by ſaying, that he thought his extraordinary ill luck would powerfully aſſiſt in bringing the Prince back again to his reaſon.

As for the money, he was not anxious about it. He himſelf did not miſs it—three times as much was at the Prince's ſervice. The Cardinal alſo aſſured me, that the ſentiments

of

of his nephew were ſincere, and that he was always ready to ſupport him in them.

The worſt was, that theſe extraordinary ſacrifices did not at all affect him. One would think the Prince at leaſt had played with ſome intent: but it was not ſo. The paſſion which we endeavoured to deſtroy ſeemed only to increaſe with bad ſucceſs: when a great ſum was ſtaked, all preſſed around his chair with expectation, but his eyes were watching for Biondello, to ſteal from his looks the news which he might have for him. Biondello always returned unſucceſsful, and he as continually loſt.

The money at laſt fell into very diſtreſſed hands. Some poor noblemen, who report ſays are ſupported by the alms they obtain in the market-place, came into the houſe perfect beggars, and left it as rich as Jews. Civitella pointed them out to me.

"Behold," ſaid he, "how many poor devils this money is of ſervice to; how comes it then that men of wit do not direct their attention to ſuch practices. This circumſtance pleaſes me: it is princely. A great man may ſometimes, by his errors, make people happy, and like a bounteous ſtream enrich the neighbouring fields by overflowing its banks.

Civitella's ideas are noble—But the Prince owes him twenty-four thouſand zechins.

At laſt the long-expected Sunday evening arrived, and my maſter could not be prevented from walking in the afternoon in the *** Church. His ſtand was taken exactly upon the

the ſame ſpot in the chapel where he had ſeen for the firſt time the unknown that had captivated him, yet ſo that he could not immediately be ſeen by her. Biondello was ordered to keep watch near the church gate, and to form a connection with the attendants of the lady. I had determined to ſtep, as by accident, into the boat at its return, to trace the unknown farther, if the firſt ſcheme ſhould not ſucceed. At the place where ſhe was, upon the report of the waterman, landed, we hired two chairs, and the Prince commanded the chamberlain Z... to follow in a ſeparate boat, and he himſelf would meet her in the church, and try his fortune there firſt. Civitella did not aſſiſt us, becauſe he had already acquired a bad character with the females at Venice, and therefore he determined not to make the lady miſtruſt his friend by his preſence. You ſee, my dear Count, that it could not be for want of plans, if the beautiful unknown eſcaped us.

Never was there offered up in a church more ſanguine prayers for ſucceſs, nor greater hopes created, and never was man deceived more cruelly. The Prince waited till ſun-ſet. He trembled at every noiſe that approached the chapel: the creeking of every church-door increaſed his anxiety. Seven long hours paſſed, and no Greek lady arrived. I ſay nothing of the ſtate of his mind. You know well what it is to be diſappointed in the attainment of an object for which one has ſighed ſeven days and nights.

LETTER VII.

THE BARON F... TO THE COUNT D'O...

AUGUST.

NO, my dear friend, you wrong the good Biondello. Indeed you entertain a falſe ſuſpicion of him. I give up to your prejudices all Italians, but this man is honeſt.

You think it ſingular that a man of ſuch brilliant talents, and conduct without example, ſhould hire himſelf as a ſervant, if he had no ſecret ends to anſwer; and from that you draw the concluſion that he is a ſuſpicious character. How! Is it then ſo extraordinary that a man of talents ſhould make himſelf reſpected by a prince, in whoſe power it is to advance his fortune? Is it diſhonourable to ſerve him? Does not Biondello clearly ſhew that his attachment to the Prince is perſonal? He has already confeſſed to him that he has a particular favour to aſk of him, and which, when known, will undoubtedly unravel all the ſecret. He perhaps has entered into his ſervice with ſome particular view; but may it not be innocent?

It appears ſtrange to you that this Biondello, when you were preſent, did not diſplay the great

great talents which he now ſeems to be poſſeſſed of. That is true, but he had not then an opportunity to diſtinguiſh himſelf? The Prince did not at that time want him, and his other qualities were diſcovered in him by accident.

But we experienced not long ago a proof of his ſincerity, which will remove all your doubts. The Prince of late has been very particularly noticed. Endeavours are made to obtain a ſecret knowledge of his manner of life, and of his acquaintances. I know not for what reaſon thoſe enquiries are made; but attend to what I ſhall communicate.

There is at St. George a public-houſe, to which Biondello often reſorts. He may have ſome love intrigue there for aught I know. He was there for ſeveral days in the company of advocates, men in office under the government, merry brothers and old acquaintances. They were equally aſtoniſhed and rejoiced to behold him again. The former friendſhip was renewed, and every one related his adventures ſince their ſeparation: Biondello alſo told his. He did it in a few words. They wiſhed him joy of his new ſituation: they had heard of the ſplendid manner in which the Prince lived; of his liberality in particular towards his people that knew how to keep a ſecret; his acquaintance with the Cardinal A... was alſo well known; and his partiality for gaming, &c. &c. Biondello ſtarted. They told him, that he played his part very well, but they ſaid they knew that he was the ſecret-meſſenger of the Prince. The advocates ſat

on

on each ſide of him, and the bottle was ſpeedily emptied. They perſuaded him to drink more: he excuſed himſelf, and ſaid that his head would not bear much wine; he therefore affected to be intoxicated.

"Yes," ſaid one of the advocates at laſt; "Biondello may underſtand his buſineſs; but he has not yet finiſhed his leſſon—he is but half a ſcholar."

"What is wanting?" ſaid Biondello.

"He underſtands one art," ſaid the man; "that is, to keep a ſecret; but he is not acquainted with the other, which is to get rid of it again with profit."

"Am I likely to find a purchaſer for it?" aſked Biondello.

The other part of the company left the room, and he remained alone with his two friends, who now came to the point. To make it ſhort, he was to give them the means by which the Prince became acquainted with the Cardinal and his nephew, to diſcover to them the ſources by which the Prince received, and the way he exhauſted his money, and to deliver into their hands the letters which were written to the Count O... Biondello appointed to meet them, and diſcuſs it another time; who it was that induced them to do this he could not get from them, but concluded, from the great offers which were made to him, that it muſt be ſome wealthy perſon who commiſſioned them to entice him to this confeſſion.

Laſt night he diſcovered to my maſter the whole of this affair. He was anxious to impriſon the advocates; but Biondello remonſtrated,

ſtrated, and ſaid, if they were ever to be at liberty again, he ſhould loſe all his credit with that claſs of people, and perhaps his life. Theſe ſort of people all hang together, and ſtand up for each other. He would ſooner, he ſaid, have the high council at Venice for his enemy than be looked upon by them as a betrayer; and he could not be ſo uſeful to the Prince, if he loſt the confidence of theſe people. We tried to conjecture with whom this curioſity might originate. Who is there at Venice that can be intereſted in knowing what my maſter receives and ſpends; what concerns he has with the Cardinal A... and what I write to you? Is this a ſcheme of the Prince .. d...? or is the Armenian with us again?

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

BARON F... TO THE COUNT O...

AUGUST.

THE Prince abounds in happineſs and love. He has found the Greek lady. Hear how this happened.

A ſtranger who had travelled over Chiozza, and gave an enchanting deſcription of that beautiful city, which is ſituated near the Gulph, made the Prince deſirous to ſee it.

Yeſterday his wiſhes were put in execution; and to avoid all unneceſſary expence, no other perſon attended him but Z... Biondello, and myſelf, as he travelled incognito. We took places in a boat that uſually ſailed to that place with company. The ſociety was not very ſelect, and the voyage far from being agreeable.

Chiozzo is built upon piles, like Venice, and has about forty thouſand inhabitants in it. You meet there very few people of diſtinction, the ſtreets are crowded with fiſhermen and ſailors. He who wears a wig and a mantle, is called a rich man; lappels and veils are the ſign of poverty. The city itſelf is handſome, but

but to admire it, you muſt not have ſeen Venice.

The waterman, who had more paſſengers to carry, was obliged to be quick in his return to Venice, and nothing at Chiozza particularly attracted the notice of the Prince. The veſſel was full when we arrived. As the company was rather troubleſome on our paſſage there, we hired a ſeparate room for our better accommodation. The Prince enquired, who were the other paſſengers? A Dominican, was the anſwer, and ſeveral ladies. My maſter was not at all curious to ſee them, and immediately went to his room.

The Greek lady was the ſole object of our diſcourſe on our paſſage, and it was the ſame on our return. The Prince repeated his adventure in the higheſt tranſports of delight; the time was paſſed in forming plans, and then rejecting them; till before we were aware of it, Venice was in ſight. Some of the paſſengers left the veſſel, the Dominican was amongſt them. The waterman went to the ladies, who, as we now learned, had been only ſeparated from us by a thin partition. He aſked them, where he ſhould land them. "Upon the iſland of Murano," was the anſwer.—"The iſland of Murano!" cried the Prince, as the ſudden tranſport of joy ſhot through his ſoul. Before I could make him any anſwer, Biondello ruſhed in.

"Do you know with whom we have travelled?"—The Prince ſtarted up—

"Is ſhe here?"

"Yes,

"Yes, ſhe is," continued Biondello. "I am juſt come from her conductor."

The Prince ruſhed out of the room. A thouſand ſenſations overpowered his mind. He was ſeized with a ſudden trembling: a death-like paleneſs ſpread itſelf over his countenance. I burned with expectation. It is impoſſible for me to deſcribe to you our ſituation.

The boat ſtopped at Murano. The Prince jumped upon the ſhore. She came. I perceived, from the Prince's countenance, that it was ſhe. Her appearance did not leave any doubt of the fact. A more beautiful figure I never ſaw: the flattering deſcriptions the Prince had given of her, were fully realized. A bluſh of ſatisfaction was ſpread over her face, when ſhe beheld the Prince. She muſt have overheard our whole converſation, and could not doubt but that ſhe had been the ſubject of it. She gave her attendant a ſignificant look, which ſeemed to ſay, This is he! and with an artleſs embarraſſment ſhe caſt her eyes upon the ground. A ſmall board was placed from the ſhore to the ſhip, on which ſhe had to walk. She ſeemed anxious to land; but although ſhe affected timidity, it appeared to ariſe more from a deſire to be aſſiſted, than the danger of croſſing the plank. The Prince ſtretched out his arm to aſſiſt her. Neceſſity overcame etiquette. She accepted his hand, and leaped upon the ſhore. The ſudden agitation of the Prince made him uncivil; for he forgot the other lady, who waited for the ſame act of politeneſs—And what would he not have forgotten in that moment? I at laſt rendered

rendered her that ſervice, and deprived myſelf of the pleaſure of obſerving how the interview, which took place between my maſter and the lady, affected her.

He ſtill held her hand in his; and, I believe, without knowing that he did ſo.

"It is not the firſt time, Signora, that—that—" He heſitated

"I ought to remember," ſhe liſped.

"In the church," ſaid he.

"In the church," ſaid ſhe. "Yes, it was there."

"And could I flatter myſelf to-day—ſo near."

Here ſhe drew her hand ſoftly out of his. He recovered himſelf immediately. Biondello, who in the mean time had ſpoken with the ſervant, came to his aſſiſtance.

"Signora," he began, "the ladies ordered their chairs to be waiting for them at a certain time, but we have arrived here ſooner than was expected. Here is a garden in the vicinity, where you may retire to avoid the tumult"

The propoſal was accepted, and you may judge with what delight the Prince accompanied her. They remained in the garden till late in the evening. It fell to my lot, aſſiſted by Z... to entertain the old lady, that the Prince might remain undiſturbed with his beloved. He made good uſe of his time, for he obtained permiſſion to pay her a viſit. He is now there. As ſoon as he returns, I ſhall know more of the matter.

Yeſterday, when we came home, we found the expected remittances from our court, but accompanied by a letter, which affected my maſter very much. He is recalled by it, and in a tone which he has not been accuſtomed to. He has anſwered it contemptuouſly, and intends to prolong his ſtay here. The remittances are juſt ſufficient to pay the intereſt of the capital which he owes. We look for an anſwer from his ſiſter with great anxiety.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

BARON F. . . TO THE COUNT O. . .

SEPTEMBER.

THE Prince has had a quarrel with his court: all our reſources from thence are cut off.

The ſix weeks, which were limited for my maſter to have paid the debt due to the Marquis are elapſed, we have received no remittances from his couſin, whom he earneſtly ſolicited to aſſiſt him; neither have we had any from his ſiſter. You may eaſily imagine that Civitella does not remind him of his engagement; but the faithful memory of the Prince continually impoſes upon him the idea, that he is ſtill the Marquis's creditor. Yeſterday came letters from the reigning Count.

We had juſt concluded a new contract with the maſter of our hotel; and the Prince had openly declared, that he intended to protract his ſtay in Venice. Without ſpeaking a word, he gave me the letter. His eyes darted fire: to me his countenance was a ſufficient indication of the contents.

Should you imagine, dear O. . . that they are at *** informed of all my maſter's connec-

tions; and that calumny has been very busy in inventing falsehoods to defame him?

They had heard with displeasure, it is said in the letter, that the Prince had not supported his former character, but had pursued a conduct which was in total contradiction to his former praise-worthy manner of thinking. They affirmed, that he rioted with women, and was addicted to gaming in an extravagant manner; that he was involved in debt; that he studied physiognomy, and sought after conjurors; that he held suspicious correspondence with prelates, and that he possessed a household, which was more than his income could support. They had even been assured, that his intention was, to compleat his bad conduct by turning an apostate, and embracing the Roman Catholic religion; and, to exculpate himself from the last serious accusation, they expected he would immediately return. A banker at Venice, to whom he was directed to deliver in the amount of his debts, was authorized, immediately after his departure, to satisfy his creditors; for, under circumstances so unpleasant, they did not think it safe to trust the money in his own hands.

What accusations! and in what an artful manner alledged! I took the letter, and read it over a second time—I endeavoured to palliate the offence, but I did not succeed.

Z... now reminded me of the secret inquiries which had been made by the Advocates. The time, the contents, all circumstances agreed. We had falsely attributed them to the Armenian. Now it was clear from whom

whom they were derived. Apoſtaſy!—But whoſe intereſt can it be to calumniate my maſter in ſuch an execrable manner? I fear it is a piece of miſchief invented by the Prince. . . . d . . . who will follow it up, to get my maſter from Venice.

He remained ſilent, with his eyes fixed upon the ground. His countenance made me tremble. I threw myſelf at his feet.

"For Heaven's ſake, gracious Prince," I exclaimed, "do not think of it ſo ſeriouſly. You ſhall, you will, have the greateſt ſatisfaction. Leave the buſineſs to me. Send me there, for it is beneath your dignity to go perſonally to juſtify yourſelf againſt ſuch vile calumnies: permit me to do it. The calumniator muſt, he ſhall, be named, and the eyes of the . . . muſt be opened."

In this ſituation, Civitella found us: he aſked, with aſtoniſhment, the reaſon of our embarraſſment. Z. . . and I were ſilent. The Prince, who never made any diſtinction between him and us, was now too much agitated in his mind to act prudently on this occaſion, and commanded us to communicate to him the contents of the letter. I heſitated, but the Prince ſnatched it from my hands, and gave it to the Marquis himſelf.

"I am your debtor, Marquis," he began, after he had finiſhed the letter, "but let that give you no uneaſineſs. Allow me but a reſpite of twenty days, and you ſhall be paid."

"Gracious Prince!" exclaimed Civitella, with feeling and ſurprize, do I deſerve this?"

"You did not chooſe to remind me of my engagement. I know your delicacy in this matter

matter, and thank you for your liberality. In twenty days, as I ſaid before, you ſhall be paid."

"What is the meaning of all this?" ſaid Civitella with anxiety. "Explain to me this myſtery. I cannot comprehend it."

We gave him all the information in our power. He fell into a rage. The Prince, he ſaid, muſt inſiſt upon ſatisfaction: the offence is infamous. In the mean time, he conjured the Prince to make uſe of his property and credit as if they were his own.

The Marquis left us, and the Prince ſtill continued ſilent. He walked with haſty ſteps up and down the room: ſomething of an extraordinary nature ſeemed to oppreſs his ſenſes. At laſt he ſtood ſtill, and murmured incoherently—"Wiſh yourſelf happineſs—at nine o'clock he died."

We looked at him with horror.

"Wiſh yourſelf happineſs," he continued. "Happineſs—Did he not ſay ſo? What was it that he meant by theſe words?"

"Why do you now repeat that fooliſh admonition?" I exclaimed. "What has this to do with it?"

"I could not then underſtand what the Armenian meant by that expreſſion. Now I comprehend him. Oh, it is intolerably hard to have a maſter over one!"

"My deareſt Prince!"

"Who can make me experience it!—Ah! it muſt be exquiſite!"

He ſtopped again. There was in his countenance a wildneſs reſembling infanity. I never before had ſeen him ſo much agitated.

"The

"The moſt miſerable among the people," he continued, "or the next Prince to the throne! are the ſame. There is but one diſtinction among men—to obey or to govern."

He once more looked into the letter.

"You have ſeen the man," he continued, "who has ventured to write thus to me. Would you ſalute him in the ſtreet, if fate had not made him your maſter? By Heavens! there is ſomething wonderfully great about the wearer of a crown!"

He continued ſpeaking in this unintelligible manner for ſome time, and many of his words I dare not commit to paper. But the Prince has diſcovered to me a circumſtance, which involved me in ſurpriſe and anxiety, and which may probably ere long lead to bad conſequences. We were ignorant of the family circumſtances at the court of . . . until now."

The Prince anſwered the letter upon the ſpot, though I oppoſed it with violence, and the manner in which he has done it will, in all probability, prevent a reconciliation.

You will alſo be deſirous, dear O. . . to hear ſomething about the Greek lady. I can ſay but little upon that ſubject, as I am not able at preſent to learn any thing ſatisfactory concerning her. The Prince diſcloſes nothing, becauſe he is, no doubt, bound to ſecrecy, as I preſume, by his word of honour. But ſhe is not the Greek lady that we ſuppoſed. She is a German, of noble extraction. It is reported, that ſhe has a mother of rank, and alſo that ſhe is the fruit of an illicit connection, of which much was ſaid in Europe. Clandeſtine purſuits, it is ſaid, have forced her to ſeek refuge

fuge at Venice, and theſe alſo are the reaſons why ſhe avoids ſociety, and ſecretes herſelf in a private dwelling, where it would have been impoſſible for the Prince to have diſcovered her. The veneration with which the Prince ſpeaks of her, and certain traits which he obſerves in her conduct, ſeem to authorize this preſumption.

He is paſſionately fond of her, and his attachment increaſes every day. In the firſt outſet, the viſits were not repeated very often; however, the ſecond week the interval was ſhortened, and now not a day paſſes without the Prince's being there. We are not able to ſee him ſometimes for whole evenings together; and even, if he is not in her ſociety, ſhe is the only object that occupies his attention. His nature ſeems to be changed. He walks about like a madman: he is inattentive to every thing that formerly intereſted him.

What will be the conſequence, deareſt friend, I cannot imagine. The quarrel with his court has thrown my maſter into the degrading ſituation of being dependent upon an individual, the Marquis Civitella. He is at preſent maſter of all our ſecrets, and perhaps our fate. Will he always think ſo nobly as he does at preſent? Will this good underſtanding be of long duration? and is it right to give ſo much power and conſequence to a man, let him be ever ſo excellent a character?

A letter has been diſpatched to the ſiſter of the Prince. The iſſue of it I hope to communicate to you in my next letter.

LETTER

LETTER X.

THE COUNT O... IN CONTINUATION.

BUT this promiſed letter never arrived. Three whole months paſſed over, before I obtained any further accounts from Venice; an interruption which is explained in the ſequel. All the letters of my friend to me had been ſuppreſſed. You may gueſs the ſituation of my mind, when I, in the month of December, obtained the following writing, which mere accident (Biondello's illneſs) brought to my hands.

" You do not write. You do not anſwer. —Come—Oh, come upon the wings of friendſhip. Our hope is gone. Read this with reſolution. All our hope is gone.

" The Marquis's wound is mortal. The Cardinal cries for revenge, and his aſſaſſins ſeek the Prince's life. My maſter—Oh, my unhappy maſter! Is it come to this? Unworthy, terrible fate! We muſt fly like criminals from the poniards of murderers.

" I write to you from the Convent ***, where the Prince has taken refuge. He is lying aſleep upon a mattraſs by my ſide. Alas! it is the ſlumber of exhauſted nature, which

will ſoon again reſign him to the horror of new ſufferings. During the ten days that ſhe was ill, no ſleep cloſed his eyes. I was preſent at the diſſection of the body. They diſcovered traces of poiſon. To-day ſhe will be buried.

" Alas, dear O... my heart is almoſt broken. I was witneſs to a ſcene that never will be rooted from my memory. I ſtood by her dying bed. She expired with divine reſignation, and her laſt words hailed her beloved to accompany her to the throne of heaven. All our reſolution forſook us; the Prince alone was firm and collected; and though he muſt have ſuffered almoſt beyond deſcription, yet he had fortitude enough to refuſe the pious fanatic her laſt prayer.

In this was incloſed the following.

TO THE PRINCE ... FROM HIS SISTER.

" THE religion which the Prince *** has embraced, will not let him want the means to continue his preſent mode of life which is to be attributed to that alone. I have tears and prayers for an unfortunate, but no more benefits for one unworthy of them."

HENRIETTE.

I ſet off immediately, and travelling night and day, in the third week I arrived at Venice. My haſte was of no conſequence. I went

went to comfort an unhappy being; but I found one who did not want my feeble aſſiſtance.

F... was very ill, and was not to be ſpoken with, when I arrived; they gave me, however, the following note:

"Return, dear O... to where you came from. The Prince does not want your aſſiſtance nor mine. His debts are payed, the Cardinal conſoled, and the Marquis reſtored. Do you remember the Armenian, who entrapped us laſt year ſo dexterouſly? In his power you'll find the Prince; who has theſe five days attended maſs."

Notwithſtanding this, I waited upon the Prince, but was refuſed admittance. On the bed of my friend, however, I heard the following extraordinary hiſtory.

After taking my lodgings, not far from the Prince's hotel, I was obliged to wait a long time before I could ſpeak with my friend F... He was indiſpoſed with a fever, and the phyſician that attended him deſpaired of his recovery. My ſituation was afflicting in the extreme; for I beheld the Prince, as it were, upon the verge of a moſt terrible abyſs, and my friend F... on the brink of the grave. Harraſſed almoſt to death with misfortunes, I reſolved, at all events, to ſpeak once more with the Prince; but I found, after ſeveral ineffectual attempts, that it was in vain; and the laſt viſit I made I was diſmiſſed with the following intimation:

"That the Prince was not to be ſpoken to by me, and that it was alone owing to his former

former attachment for me that I ſtill enjoyed my liberty."

Biondello, who told me this, added to the weight of his information, by his ſerious and ſtrongly marked countenance. I was not able to make him any anſwer, but felt my knees ſhake under me, and my lips quiver in a convulſive manner. I went immediately to my lodgings, and, almoſt inſenſible with apprehenſion, threw myſelf into an arm chair, and endeavoured to diſpel the gloom of anticipation that hung over me. A noiſe brought me at laſt to myſelf; I looked up and ſaw the phyſician who attended F... ſtanding before me, whom I had not heard enter the room during my perplexity.

"I like to be myſelf the meſſenger of happy news," ſaid he to me, "and I come to announce to you, that your friend F... finds himſelf ſo much recovered, that he is able to converſe without difficulty, and wiſhes to ſpeak to you; the cauſe of his illneſs ſeems to be entirely removed, but you muſt expect to ſee him weak, and rather low."

I did not ſuffer him to proceed in his ſpeech, but wrapt myſelf up in a cloak, and haſtened to congratulate my friend upon his recovery, with as much ſatisfaction as if the welfare of millions had depended upon my walk.

"Oh! How much have I ſighed after you, my dear O..." ſaid he, with a feeble voice, as he preſſed my hand to his breaſt; "but the phyſician conjured me, until now, to avoid all ſenſations."

I looked at him. He was lying before me the

the picture of death. A tear ſtarted from my eye; I could not ſuppreſs it; he obſerved it.

"I thank you my friend, for this ſincere proof of affection; it convinces me that my loſs will not be indifferent to you."

"Speak not of your death," ſaid I, with concern, "the phyſician aſſures me he has removed your complaint, and that in a little time you will be well again."

"Aye," he replied, with a deep ſigh, "he has repeatedly ſaid ſo, but I think the contrary. My internal feelings prove to me that I cannot exiſt long in this world."

He ſunk back on his pillow. A cold ſweat ſtood upon his forehead. His ſpeech became fainter by degrees; but I collected ſufficient to underſtand, that he ſuſpected ſome one had poiſoned him, for that he and myſelf had been ſuſpected for ſome time of having maliciouſly and ſecretly calumniated the Prince at court. This accounted for the cold and unfriendly treatment I had lately received from the Prince; and the very thought of being ſubject to ſo powerful an enemy threw me into a ſtate of melancholy. I looked back upon my conduct, and tried to recollect any circumſtance that might throw ſome light upon the matter, but in vain. In the midſt of theſe reflections F... awaked, which arouſed me from my lethargy. His firſt word was to entreat me to be ſecret as to what he had diſcovered reſpecting himſelf, and perſuaded me, fearful that a ſimilar lot would befall me, to abſent myſelf immediately after his death from Venice. He added, with a ſmile,

"See

" See me laid in my grave firſt, for I wiſh very much to receive that laſt ſervice from the hand of a friend whom I affectionately love."

I embraced him, and bedewed his death-pale cheek with tears.

" I forgive thoſe," he ſaid, " who are the cauſe of my death; it will not be painful to me; and, as you have not deprived me of your preſence in my laſt hours, I owe you the greateſt thanks."

A long pauſe enſued;—after that F... related to me as follows. I have collected into a narrative the ſentences which he ſpoke at intervals, and added what I extorted from him by queſtions; for his feebleneſs did not permit him to ſpeak in a continued ſeries. I alſo was often obliged to aſſiſt him on account of the defect of his memory, as far as it could be done by queſtions. I muſt be permitted to introduce him ſpeaking here, becauſe of all that I communicate, nothing is done by me but the chronological arrangement. I have indeed given myſelf the trouble to uſe his own language, which I am enabled to do, as I had my pocket-book always in my hand, and carefully noted down every thing which I thought would ſlip from my memory.

" I begin," ſaid F... " my ſtory from that period, when my letters to you were intercepted. By the laſt of them * you know, that the Prince had fallen out with his court, and had nothing more to expect from thence. His

* That from the month of September. See the foregoing.

His ſiſter did not write to him, and left us for the ſpace of two months in an anxious ſtate of uncertainty, when the letter, which I incloſed for you laſt, arrived. It threw the Prince into the moſt horrid ſtate of diſtreſs. His debt to Civitella was very much increaſed, and his expences were not in the leaſt diminiſhed; and we found there was not any probability of maintaining the ſyſtem much longer.——

" I muſt confeſs to you, that at that period I ſeldom enjoyed a happy hour. In the moſt ſplendid entertainments I was ſolitary, and ſunk in deep reflection. Z... contented himſelf as well as he could. If he was not obliged to be at home, from neceſſity, he ſeldom ſtaid with me; and if at any time I mentioned the ſubject of our diſtreſs to him, he never liſtened to me, but anſwered, that he did not chooſe to interfere in his maſter's concerns. I had no friend left; and from you I received no anſwers to my letters. The Prince was ſeldom to be ſeen, being in general occupied with Biondello, upon the management of his intrigues. He muſt have had no other thought than that of viſiting the Greek lady, for he had already promiſed four times to the Marquis to pay him; but, inſtead of that, he borrowed freſh ſums. You know formerly, with what ſtrict punctuality he performed a promiſe; but at that period he was completely inattentive to it.

" It was as if every thing exiſted only for him, and that he had the ſole right to command it. The Marquis ſtill continued the generous unintereſted friend of the Prince, who

who ſtudied his wiſhes, before they came to maturity, and ſought, with unremitting zeal, to ſatisfy him in every particular. In his hands, I may ſay, our fate reſted; and yet he knew how to give his conduct ſuch a colour, that an indifferent perſon would have thought his exiſtence depended upon a ſingle look from the Prince.

"Thus ſtood the affair, when the Prince one evening came home very late from the *Bucentauro*. He brought a book with him; the contents of which he was ſo anxious to be acquainted with, that, during the time he was undreſſing, he deſired me to read it out aloud to him; for Biondello, on whom this honour was uſually conferred, under the pretext of indiſpoſition, which he had complained of for fourteen nights, had been diſmiſſed to go to bed. At laſt the Prince retired to reſt, and being unable to repoſe until the book was finiſhed, I was obliged to ſit upon the ſide of his bed and continue my taſk. He liſtened very attentively, as he ſupported his head upon his right arm.

"The clock in the ſteeple of St. Mark's church ſtruck one*, at that inſtant both the candles, which ſtood before me upon the table, were extinguiſhed. We heard it thunder, which in a few minutes becames ſo violent, that the houſe ſeemed to ſhake under us; quick flaſhes of lightning illuminated our room,

* The Count O... has probably given here the hour in which this happened, according to our reckoning of time; in Venice, and other provinces of Italy, they begin to count the hours from *one*, at the beginning of the night.

room, and immediately all the windows and doors burſt open.

" *Beware, Prince! that thou doſt not ſtain thy hand with blood,*" cried a hollow frightful voice.—Again it thundered and lightned, after which a ſolemn ſtillneſs reigned for ſome time.

" Is this a dream ?"—cried the Prince, after a pauſe.

I did not make any anſwer, and was in doubt whether I ſhould quit the room or not. In the mean time, Biondello ruſhed in.

" For God's ſake, what is the mat. - ?" he exclaimed with trepidation; but, witho. waiting for an anſwer, he took the wax candles from the table, and brought them back lighted. He was half dreſſed, and appeared ſo dreadfully frightened, that I became very much alarmed for him. Obſerving that the Prince had not received any injury, he ſeemed in ſome meaſure comforted.

" The Prince aſked him if he had heard any thing ? He anſwered in the affirmative, and his relation accorded exactly with what we had heard; however, he did not ſee any lightning. He was not aſleep, and for that reaſon his evidence effectually proved, that our imaginations had not deceived us. Biondello received orders to go to bed again, and the Prince commanded him to obſerve the ſtricteſt ſilence as to what he had heard and ſeen.

" What do you think of this ?" ſaid the Prince, as ſoon as he was gone.

" I muſt

" I muſt own to you, gracious Prince, that this event has almoſt deprived me of my ſenſes.

" Confeſs, that you will not willingly believe it to be a miracle, becauſe you know that I hold them in contempt."

" And yet I know not how to explain it in a natural way.

" We have read ſtrange things in the book; how, if our fancy ſhould have play'd us a trick?"

" But that we both heard one and the ſame thing, that the candles in the mean time were extinguiſhed at the ſame moment, and doors and windows burſt open, is certain; and Biondello has heard the ſame?

" That might, perhaps, be explained. The windows burſt open becauſe they were not faſtened; the door from the ſame cauſe; the preſſure of the air became then ſtronger, and the thorough draft put out the candles."

" But the words we heard—the lightning—the thunder?

" I aſcribe them to imagination."

But could imagination work upon *three* different perſons exactly at the *ſame* time, and in the *ſame* manner?

" If all our ideas turn to the ſame point, why not?—Have you never heard, that whole ſocieties have been deceived in the ſame manner? To what cauſe elſe can we aſcribe the exiſtence of ſo many fanatics?"

I allow this; but Biondello's ideas could not ſurely be ſimilar to ours, and yet—

" It

"It is poſſible. Have you not heard that he was lying awake in his bed, and in all probability liſtened to every thing that was ſaid. Only a thin wainſcot ſeparates his room from mine, and you, beſides, read with a very loud voice?"

I became ſilent, not becauſe I was convinced, but becauſe I did not like to contradict him; for his countenance proved to me that he was angry at my diſputing the queſtion with him. He ſeemed ſatisfied, but the recollection of what had paſſed baniſhed ſleep from my eyes.

The following day was deſtined for a grand feaſt, which was given in honour of the Prince of St. Benedetto. All that Venetian ſplendor and pleaſure could invent was united here. It was to conclude with a very brilliant maſquerade-ball. A valet-de-chamber, whom the Prince a ſhort time ago took into his ſervice, becauſe he ſaved his life, remained alone at home; whilſt myſelf and the Prince's whole houſhold, Biondello not excepted, who forgot his complaints to join the party, went to the entertainment. The Prince was pleaſed with his attention ſo much the more, becauſe, in ſpite of his indiſpoſition, he inſiſted upon going in ſuch a manner, that the greateſt love for his Prince could only have induced him. In the maſk of a Bramin he followed him every where, at a little diſtance, like his ſhadow. I did not ſuffer him to go out of my ſight, becauſe I expected ſomething might take place, that might lead to a diſcovery of the myſterious warning we had heard the foregoing night;

to

to which ground I alſo attributed the foreſight of Biondello. My conjecture was but too well founded. The croud of maſks which were preſent, left little room in the ſpacious hall for the dancers; thus, they were rather crouded. The Prince, in endeavouring to paſs ſome one in great haſte, tore a part of his garment. He was obliged to leave the hall immediately to repair the accident. Biondello conducted him into a ſide-room, and I followed. Picture to yourſelf our aſtoniſhment, when we beheld, in a receſs, the Greek lady and Civitella upon a ſofa, in an amorous ſituation. Not one of us was able to utter a word. The Prince ſeemed thunder-ſtruck: his eyes rolled wildly in his head, and the muſcles of his face became convulſive. The couple apparently did not obſerve us. Before we could prevent him, the Prince ſeized a dagger, which laid upon a table, and ruſhing towards Civitella laid him bleeding at his feet. The Greek lady ran with loud ſhrieks into the hall.

"For God's ſake, ſave yourſelf gracious Prince," exclaimed Biondello, "loſe not a moment." At that inſtant he laid hold of the Prince, who was quite ſtupified, and hurried him away through a ſide-door. I haſtened after them. Scarcely was the door cloſed, when we heard a great noiſe in the room. In their embarraſſment they had probably forgotten to purſue us; we therefore made our eſcape. The Prince wiſhed to go to his hotel, but Biondello prevented him, and added, that he could

could not be ſecure there. The powers above * puniſh very rigorouſly any one that attacks a maſk; and in ſpite of his rank, he was in doubt whether they would not to-morrow morning ſend after him one of their *Fante's*, † which might have very bad conſequences. He promiſed to conduct him to a place of ſecurity till the affair could be ſettled. Biondello walked before us with haſty ſteps; we followed him very cloſe, and I muſt confeſs, with great dread and anxiety. The apparition played upon my fancy ſo much, that I ſaw at every ſtep figures, which ſeemed to me all armed with daggers. From the Prince's countenance, I eaſily could perceive, that he was alſo very much diſcouraged. Not one of us ſpoke a word. Like fugitive criminals we ſtole thro' the private paſſages and bye ſtreets. We were fortunate enough to meet, near *St. Samuele*, a boat, which, to all appearance, ſeemed waiting for us. We ſtepped into it: Biondello commanded the boatman to row into the *Seſtier* of *Caſtello*, and to land us near *St Franciſco della Vigna*, a Franciſcan convent. We glided like lightning through the water. Houſes and ſteeples that bordered the river ſoon vaniſhed from our ſight. The moon ſhone with beautiful ſplendor; and, at intervals, we heard the diſtant oars as they daſhed into the ſtream; the

* This expreſſion, or, in his language, *quei in alto*, the Venetians uſe as a name for the tribunal of the Inquiſition. A Venetian is ſo afraid of that word, that he makes uſe of it only in caſes of great neceſſity—and ſpeaks of this tribunal with the higheſt veneration and beating heart.

† An officer of this tribunal.

the melancholy ſong of the *Barcarole*. § —I ſhall never forget the impreſſion that night made upon my mind.

We arrived, at laſt, at the before-mentioned place; and Biondello procured us, even at that time of night, through the means of an acquaintance, the beſt accommodation. We were obliged to live there in great ſecrecy, and I obſerved that the Prince deeply felt his ſituation. Biondello walked out in different maſks to learn how the matter ſtood, and what the Prince had to fear; but for many days he returned without ſucceſs. At laſt he came into the room, about night-fall, in great agitation.

"We muſt depart from hence, he cried with a trembling voice, we muſt depart this moment from hence! Your life hangs on a thread, my Prince! The Marquis is mortally wounded; the Cardinal has hired twelve aſſaſſins to murder you, and he who perpetrates the deed, is promiſed one hundred ſequins; a price which an aſſaſſin would be ſtudious to earn, were it even to take away the life of the head of the church. They already are acquainted with our abode—we muſt haſten from hence as quickly as poſſible!"

Had

§ *Barcarole* are a kind of watermen. They ſing for entertainment, whilſt they are lying ſolitary in their boats, expecting cuſtomers. They know by heart many paſſages of the poets, and add to them muſic of their own compoſition, which they endeavour to make adequate to the words. One is heard to begin, another, who perhaps does not know the firſt, hears, and anſwers him, and they ſeldom diſcontinue their ſong till their buſineſs calls them away.

Had not Biondello been with us, we could not poſſibly have eſcaped our fate; but this indefatigable and attentive man aſſiſted us always with the beſt advice. He brought us cloaths, as a diſguiſe, and we hired a boat for our conveyance. Biondello entered into converſation with the waterman, and we experienced, to our aſtoniſhment in what great danger we were placed, and how induſtrious the aſſaſſins were to earn the hundred ſequins. And ſuſpecting that ſome one might be able, by the boatman, to trace our route, to deceive them, we continually changed our boat, and went a very circuitous way about.

At laſt we arrived at the convent.... A friendly monk, alſo an acquaintance of Biondello, received us at the gate, and conducted us immediately to a room, which was retired and clean, but not furniſhed for the reception of a prince.

"A lady, in the laſt agonies of death, wiſhes to ſpeak to you," ſaid the monk the next day to the Prince.

He ſtarted as if he had ſuffered an electrical ſtroke.

"Who is ſhe?" he exclaimed haſtily.

"I do not know; I have not enquired concerning that. She has lived for two years in this convent. From whence ſhe came is unknown. It is our duty to receive every ſtranger, within our walls, without firſt aſking who they are, and from whence they come? —We ſuffer every one to keep his ſecret, if he will not diſcover it to us willingly."

The

The Prince ſeemed loſt in deep reflection.

"How long has ſhe been ill?" he ſaid at laſt.

"To-day is the ſeventh."

"Where is ſhe? I will go to her!"—

He followed the monk.

In the ſick-room, my dear friend, was his Greek lady. I have forgot to mention, that he had not an opportunity to ſpeak to her for two days previous to the unhappy maſquerade-ball; it was clear now what detained her. I myſelf ſaw her, and I am not able to deſcribe my feelings, when I beheld the moſt charming creature in the creation, who was formerly the admiration of every one, now the victim of horror and diſeaſe. Upon her lovely face were marked the ſigns of death.—I no longer doubted, that at the ball we muſt have been miſtaken in the perſon; but the Prince, in total oppoſition to his former character, ſtill entertained his doubts. This affected his ſenſibility to ſuch a degree, that nothing could be equal to it. His ardent affection threw him into the moſt violent paroxiſms of deſpair, when he ſaw the object of his heart in the arms of death; but, in a few minutes, the fatal ſcene at the ball ruſhed upon his mind—he turned from her with diſguſt, impreſſed with the idea that ſhe had treated his love with ſcorn. His eyes ſparkled with rage, and, as in agony, his limbs trembled; but this, when he looked upon the patient innocent, was changed into ſympathetic melancholy. His ſituation was terrible. Although ſhe herſelf ſuffered very much, ſhe ſought to conſole him.

This

This circumſtance almoſt drove him to diſtraction. I tore him by force from her bed. He ſat ſilent in our room for ſome time; at laſt he exclaimed—

"I am ſhamefully deceived! She, whom I adored, deſpiſed me, and rioted licentiouſly in the arms of another."

Gracious Prince, be ſatisfied. All circumſtances clearly prove, that ſhe was lying ill here when the deed happened. It muſt have been quite a different perſon.

"Did I not ſee her—I, who preſerved in the ſanctuary of my heart the ſmalleſt of her favours—I, who exiſted only for her, who thought her one and the ſame with myſelf—to be treated thus!"——

Pardon me, gracious Prince, did you not ſay yourſelf, that under ſuch circumſtances, one might be eaſily deceived?

"Did you not ſee her alſo?"

Your raſh action hindered us from obſerving her minutely.

"And how came ſhe to know that I was in the convent. The plan is finely laid to decoy me again into the net; but it will not ſucceed!"

Do not miſtruſt her.—An unhappy affair brought us hither; and, meeting her in ſuch a pitiable ſituation, muſt have operated ſtrongly upon your mind, and—

"Will you remind me of my weakneſs— I believed, from the firſt moment, that it was a juggle?"

"Her illneſs a juggle?"

"Is that impoſſible, after having had the experience that we have?"

I know not how long this converſation would have laſted; for the more I endeavoured to convince him of his error, ſo much the more he oppoſed me; and his underſtanding, formerly ſo enlightened, did not look upon what appeared the fact as at all probable.

Biondello's arrival prevented a continuation of our diſcourſe. He did not, however, bring news of our being ſafe; yet the Prince became, in one reſpect, more compoſed. For, he ſaid it was in ſeveral places reported, that the lady, on account of whom we had ſuffered ſo much, was no other perſon than a certain V. . . lli, who was of an indifferent character, and extremely like the Greek lady. The ſimilarity of the dreſs, and the darkneſs of the room in which they were fitting, ſerved alſo to deceive us. How his beloved knew that he was in the convent, was alſo explained to his ſatisfaction. One of her footmen had diſcovered Biondello—ſhe had often made particular inquiries after the Prince, and having diſcovered his retreat, deſired once more to ſee and ſpeak to her beloved. Conſcious of her innocence, her ſufferings made a greater impreſſion upon the mind of the Prince. He very ſeldom quitted her bed, and gave himſelf up entirely to ſorrow. The cauſe of her diſſolution will alſo be that of mine.—Oh! that I might die with the tranquillity that ſhe did! Her patience under her ſufferings, her ſerenity of mind, when the ſhadows of death ſurrounded her, contributed to make her more beloved

than

than ever. Oh! that I might be certain of ſuch a happy death as hers! *

This angel died by poiſon; for, on the diſſection of her body, at which I was obliged to be preſent, the cleareſt proofs of it were viſible. †

The ſituation of the Prince I am not able to deſcribe to you. I trembled for his ſafety; for when he ſaw the corpſe carried to the grave, he burſt into a loud hyſterical laugh, and, as in a fit of madneſs, uttered expreſſions that I never wiſh to recollect.

Several days paſſed, in which nothing remarkable happened. Biondello's accounts were always the ſame, and the Marquis had not yet recovered from his indiſpoſition. We did not perceive that they were at all ſolicitous to diſcover us, although, he aſſured us, that they had not yet given over the purſuit; and that our ſafety depended upon our remaining quiet; for their revenge would not be ſatisfied but by blood.

For want of room I was obliged to ſleep in the Prince's apartment. It was about midnight when he came to my bedſide and waked me.

"Have you heard nothing?" ſaid he—I replied in the negative, for I had ſlept very ſound, my reſt having been broken the preceding night.

Has any thing happened to you, gracious ſir?

 "Had

* This wiſh of my friend was fulfilled in every particular.

† He has already mentioned this in his laſt letter. See the foregoing.

"Had I not the proof in my hands, I ſhould think it was a dream. It ſeems as if I am ſurrounded every where with inviſible beings. —I was juſt on the point of falling aſleep, when I was diſturbed by the moſt enchanting muſic. Whilſt I liſtened from whence the ſound came, a genius appeared to deſcend through the upper part of my bed, graced with all the charms with which our painters uſually repreſent them; but no pencil ever pourtrayed ſuch a perfection of irreſiſtible beauty. A ſoft light ſurrounded it, and illuminated my bed. I had drawn the curtain very cloſe. The night lamp burnt faintly, and on witneſſing this apparition, I reflected upon the former prophecy, which, alas! was ſo punctually fulfilled. I remained loſt in aſtoniſhment and fear. With a melodious voice it ſpoke to me:

"My lord and maſter ſends thee a letter; open and read it, but not before the firſt beam of the ſun announces day, and conquer all diſbelief!"——

"He let fall a letter, and melted, as it were, into a cloud, which vaniſhed by degrees. His diſappearance was accompanied with the ſame agreeable muſic as announced his approach, and a rich perfume diffuſed itſelf around me.

The Prince ſhewed me the letter. It was exactly like a common letter; only the ſeal conſiſted of ſeveral ſymbols, which we could not explain, and it was not directed. He put it into his pocket.

Will you not open it?

"To-morrow at the appointed hour."

You

You believe, then, in this apparition?

He was ſilent for a while.

"Muſt I not?—Oh! what would I give if I could but ſtill doubt it, and perſevere in that philoſophy, of which I boaſted ſo much! Now I muſt give up all. I believe now in every thing! Can I do otherwiſe, after what has happened to me?"

He ſlept no more that night, but converſed of ghoſts and ſupernatural appearances; and I ſoon experienced how much he inclined to believe in the poſſibility of them. At the appointed time he took the letter from his pocket, and, behold, there was a direction upon it! This, although a triſle, greatly aſtoniſhed the Prince; and you may eaſily conceive how he was affected at the moment. He opened it. It was a mere cover; but there was incloſed a receipt from Civitella, not only for the ſums which he had lent to the Prince, but alſo for the intereſt; and a letter from him, of which I will give you a copy; I tranſcribed it on account of its ſingularity:

"My gracious Prince!

"The enormity of my crime is ſo great, that I aſk of you forgiveneſs, and hope your heart will not deny it, as my repoſe and future happineſs depends upon it. You puniſhed my imprudence, at that unfortunate ball, by a ſevere blow; and I, like a madman, ſuffered myſelf to be overcome by rage, and thirſted for revenge. After the abominable cuſtom of this country, I begged of my uncle to hire a party of banditti to kill you—the ſaviour of my life.

The

The thought oppreſſes me with horror; but you, who gave the wound, were alſo able to cure it, and could have done it by one word? —Oh! you, at whoſe command the higher powers wait, why do you fly from my weak unpardonable revenge, which you could have ſuppreſſed at pleaſure?—Why did you ſend me the ſums of money, which I lent you with ſuch ſatisfaction, thus to deprive me of the conſolation, which you at firſt ſo nobly gave me? Whilſt you thought me worthy to ſhare with you my fortune, you did not want it?—Oh! act with generoſity and forgive me, for, without that, my recovery will be to me the moſt unhappy period of my life. I cannot excuſe my temerity; no, I am not able to do it—but you will be leſs indignant at my conduct, if you conſider that it is by education alone ſuch a deteſtable ſelf-revenge can be juſtified.

" Am I not by ſuch appearances puniſhed enough?—Alas! the recollection of it will never be rooted from my memory.

" As I lay upon my bed, ſuffering the moſt excruciating pain, and the bye-ſtanders expecting my death every moment, there appeared to me a form, in a long black Tartar dreſs, and girded round the loins with a golden belt. It approached near to my bed: its white beard flowed upon its breaſt, and a penetrating frown ſat upon its brow: it looked around, and immediately my attendants ſunk to ſleep.

" Wretch!—It cried, with a terrible voice —who has ventured to perſecute him with vengeance,

vengeance, who could inſtantly deſtroy thy life, if he would make uſe of the power which he has in his hands?

"I will not repeat the dreadful remonſtrance, which I heard. It was a miracle that I did not expire under the agitation this appearance occaſioned. Having ſtruggled for ſome time in the moſt terrible torments, the form touched me. I was inſtantly free from pain, and perfectly recovered. Before me, on the table, were laying heaps of gold, for which I was obliged to give a receipt. It alſo deſired me to aſk your pardon in writing, though I did not know where to addreſs you, and upon which my whole welfare would depend. Oh! do not refuſe your compaſſion to a miſerable wretch.——

"When, and how, you will obtain this letter I do not know; but the ſpirit aſſured me that you would, for certain, have it.

"Alas, gracious Prince! return to me again. For, with ſincere repentance, an unworthy being will wait upon you in the antichamber of your hotel, as ſoon as day breaks.

"Your unworthy friend,

"CIVITELLA."

"What we felt on reading that letter I need not, dear O... deſcribe to you. It was an event which filled us with aſtoniſhment. The Prince did not doubt the fact; but he would not quit his haunt, without firſt having made all poſſible inquiry as to its authenticity, Biondello, who was ſtill aſleep, was called, and commiſſioned to inquire very cautiouſly into every

every circumſtance. The voice immediately repeated,

" Overcome your diſbelief !"

Biondello croſſed himſelf, and went off. He did not go far from the convent, for he heard from his ſpies, that we were perfectly ſafe; and he ſoon returned with this happy news. The Prince conjured us to be ſilent as to what had happened, and ſet off immediately.

We arrived at the hotel, and found not only Civitella but alſo the Cardinal, who came towards the Prince, and, in the humbleſt manner, aſked his pardon. That he forgave them willingly, and was highly ſatisfied to free himſelf from ſuch a dangerous dilemma, is eaſily to be imagined. Nor did he undeceive them as to the idea, that higher powers were at his command, and that the ghoſt had appeared to Civitella by his deſire; he only begged of them to keep it a ſecret. Civitella aſſured him that it was quite public, for the people who waited upon him knew it, and had already cried him up as a ſaint.

" But the people were aſleep, how could they diſcover the viſion?" replied the Prince, with ſome doubt.

Yes, gracious Prince, ſaid Civitella--but they ſaw the form deſcending into the room, and witneſſed, on their recovering from their terror, my reſtoration. They ſaw me at the brink of the grave; and to be reſtored ſo ſuddenly, muſt have excited their aſtoniſhment; and can you blame me, that in the moment when I found myſelf ſnatched from the jaws

of

of death, I called you, with gratitude, my benefactor?——You did not prohibit me to do it; and had that been the cafe, I believe I ſhould have violated your commands. Oh! moſt gracious Prince! there is no greater pain than for an uncorrupted mind to ſuppreſs the feelings of a grateful heart!—He threw himſelf at the feet of the Prince, whilſt tears burſt from his eyes.

"I have already forgiven you," ſaid the Prince, raiſing him from the ground.

But, am I beloved by you as formerly?—Am I not unworthy of it? He continued in tears.

"When I forgive, I do not do it by halves," ſaid the Prince, embracing him.

Life now ſeemed to beam afreſh in the Marquis. He did not even appear to have been at all ill, for he looked as healthy as ever; but a fixed melancholy, that was diſcernible in his countenance, extinguiſhed thoſe traces of benevolence which had formerly rendered him ſo attractive. But by this reconciliation he became quite the reverſe. Elated with his ſucceſs, he ran through the room in an exceſs of joy that indicated his happineſs. After the firſt intoxication was over, he was overwhelmed with an agreeable anxiety, which did not at all belong to his character, and from which one could perceive how much he felt his indiſcretion. This, and the ſolicitude which originated with it, made him more agreeable to the Prince, and he became to him as dear as ever: he underſtood the ſmalleſt hint; he ſought to read in his eyes his

moſt diſtant wiſhes, and ſoon learned how to regulate his conduct according to his deſires; beſides, that he ſufficiently underſtood how to give his actions an air of duty, and continually exclaimed, how much he owed to the Prince. Believing that the Prince's violence upon the night of the ball was nothing more than a puniſhment for his extravagancies;—for he did not conceive that the Prince had taken the lady that was with him for his Grecian; he now altered his mode of life, and often thanked the Prince that he had puniſhed him ſo ſeverely. He declared that he was proud of it—that he eſteemed him higher than ever, and thought him more worthy of his friendſhip. He candidly confeſſed to me, that he had at that time entertained an idea, which would in the end have been his ruin. He had laid a plan to ſeduce the daughter of the ...t..io, a charming innocent girl of ſixteen. He had ſeen her, for the firſt time, at maſs, and her beauty impreſſed him with this reſolution.

To gain acceſs to the houſe of her parents, and to ſucceed in this diabolical ſcheme, he was obliged to court the favour of the ſame lady with whom we had ſeen him at the ball; becauſe ſhe was a near relation to the family, and could eaſily introduce him.—The ſtrictneſs with which ſhe was watched, would have required him to commit a chain of crimes before he could have obtained his aim. His paſſion was ſo violent, that, united with his natural imprudence, he did not heſitate to adopt the moſt impolite manners to accompliſh

pliſh his purpoſe. At the brink of the grave, he added, a man reflects upon all his actions in another point of view; and even thoſe, that formerly gave him great pleaſure, and upon which he had often ſpoken with delight, pierced him to the very ſoul with horror.

Oh! deareſt friend, Civitella is, notwithſtanding all his licentiouſneſs, a noble man, and, if he commits a fault, he knows how to compenſate for it, in ſuch a manner, that one muſt attribute it to him as a great action. From his diſcourſe, and from his anſwers to my queſtions, I could diſtinctly perceive, that it was not him, but the Cardinal his uncle, who cauſed the banditti to purſue us ſo induſtriouſly; but he generouſly took all upon himſelf, and endeavoured to prevent us from diſcovering the truth! It is much to be lamented, that ſo ſuperior an underſtanding, with ſuch a good heart, and ſuch an enchanting appearance, muſt periſh upon a Venetian ſoil.*

It

* My friend here goes too far. Although the ſciences at Venice are in a bad ſtate, for want of encouragement, there, however, are open to an enquiring mind very conſiderable libraries, from which a man may gain a great deal of uſeful knowledge. But the caſe is, that they will not make uſe of them. And the young nobleman, who intends to fit himſelf for the ſervice of the ſtate, has to ſtudy hiſtory and politics; a few departments, which, if they are filled up, require talents and induſtry, and are equally uſeful and neceſſary for thoſe whom their birth has deſtined for the government of the republic. Thus has my friend praiſed the talents of the Marquis; they ſeem, however, to me, to be more of a glittering nature than founded upon learning.

It is a ſingular thing, conſidering the bad education which the children of the nobility receive, from the moſt ſtupid and rudeſt ſort of prieſts, called abbes, that he was ſo enlightened, or poſſeſſed of that ſenſibility, which gives to all his actions ſo much captivating intereſt.

I have neglected to mention, that curioſity induced us to aſk the Marquis to ſhew us the place where he had been wounded. He opened his ſhirt, and, to our great ſurprize, we perceived that there was not any appearance of a wound, or the ſmalleſt mark of any violence.

CONTINUATION OF COUNT O...

My friend exhauſted himſelf ſo much by his relation, that all the powers of nature ſeemed ſuſpended. My doubts were but too well founded; he appeared to ſleep, but it was that of death—My tears are ſacrificed to his memory! He was a man of fine ideas; but from the goodneſs of his heart, and an unſuſpecting diſpoſition, he became ſo much the eaſier a prey to his enemies, whoſe diſlike to him aroſe from his attachment to his maſter.

I was now left alone in a great city, poſſeſſed of no friend, to whom I could communicate my thoughts, and was obliged to take particular care not to talk with any one but upon common topics, becauſe I preſumed, and with reaſon, that I was ſurrounded by ſpies, who would put a falſe conſtruction upon my words, and make that a plea for poiſoning me.

me. The death of my friend had made me cautious. His earneſt requeſt, that I would quit the place, and the meſſage that the Prince ſent to me by Biondello, now preyed upon my mind with double force; my ſorrow alſo contributed in a great meaſure to aid my determination. I reſolved to leave Venice. I locked myſelf up in my room for a few days, and then forſook a city in which I had loſt two beloved friends. Before I went, I ſent to the Prince a card of departure.

I had travelled about ſixty Italian miles, when the idea that I might poſſibly ſave the Prince, obliged me to return. I was irreſiſtibly compelled to act in this manner; for my mind, ever anxious for his ſafety, repreſented to me in black colours all that might befall him; and I looked upon it as criminal not to endeavour to reſcue him. Fixed in this reſolution, I entered upon the execution of my plan, without once conſidering the dangers and difficulties which ſurrounded ſuch an undertaking. I took the precaution, however, for fear of being diſcovered, to diſmiſs my faithful ſervant, and the only one I had taken with me. I parted from him with deep regret; for he was the only one who had ſometimes, by his compaſſionate fidelity, afforded me conſolation. I was now obliged to go alone: but it was abſolutely neceſſary. He was an incomparable good ſervant; but he had one fault, which I could not break him of, although he had ſerved me twenty years, and which was in oppoſition to every principle of my ſcheme.—He could not keep a ſecret.

What

What he knew, he publiſhed to the whole world, and, though he did not tell it in direct terms, his actions and behaviour betrayed it to every one he was acquainted with; if he thought well of them, and fancied they were poſſeſſed of the ſame goodneſs of heart as himſelf. It could not but happen that he was very often deceived, but this did not make him at all more prudent. To put unbounded confidence in every one was his maxim, from which he never departed; for he uſed to ſay, that he ſhould feel it ſeverely if he was ſuſpected by any one; and for that reaſon he thought it would be the ſame to others: and that the whole world truſted him he was convinced. He believed every one that was at all reſerved in his conduct, to be free from guile. If one expreſsly told him to be ſilent upon any ſubject, he became anxious not to let any thing drop that could betray him, which never failed to lead him into an error. For he had always in his mind, and at his tongue's end, what he ſhould not diſcover, and very often repeated to himſelf my prohibition; and it frequently happened that he acted thus in ſociety, and ſaid to himſelf, loud and ſignificantly, "Caſpar, don't forget that your maſter has told you ſo and ſo—" (and immediately mentioned the thing which he ought to have kept a ſecret,)—"you muſt not chatter out what he has prohibited you to mention."

He no ſooner heard that it was public, than he maintained firmly that he had told it to nobody.

This ſerious fault was, however, balanced by

by his other good qualities, which induced me to keep him. At firſt I thought of diſmiſſing him my ſervice, as I was not accuſtomed to put up with ſuch conduct. I uſed to practiſe an artifice upon him, which ſucceeded extremely well, as he was obliged to keep every thing he heard a ſecret. I related to him, at the ſame time, ſomething that was unconnected with the ſubject, and deſired him particularly, not to mention it: by that means I deceived him, and the ſubject I wiſhed to be a ſecret was forgotten.

I did not mention to him my determination reſpecting him; but wrote a letter, and ſent him forward with it, under the pretext of beſpeaking quarters for me. He was obliged to deliver this letter to a landlord at ***, with whom I had frequently lodged, and who knew him to be an honeſt man. I requeſted him to inform my ſervant that I had thrown myſelf into a river. I incloſed a bank-note, and commanded him to make the inn his home; begging of him, at the ſame time, not to make any enquiries after me. To preſerve appearances, and to give him an idea that it grieved me to part from him, I wrote an affectionate farewell-letter to him, and begged of him again to fulfil my laſt and particular requeſt.

Poor Caſpar's caſe was extremely hard; but I was under the neceſſity of treating him in that manner. Had I told him that I was obliged to part with him, on account of my intention to travel privately, he would have ſought me every where, and would have enquired

quired of every body, whether they had ſeen or heard any thing of me; my hiding place, by that means, would have been diſcovered, and my death the certain conſequence. I was convinced that he would punctually fulfil my laſt requeſt, and it would be very eaſy for me to find him again when I wanted him. I begged of him to be comforted; that he would not commit ſuicide I was convinced; for the reſpect which he had for the laſt requeſt of a deceaſed friend was uncommonly great.

I hope my readers will pardon this digreſſion; Caſpar was my faithful ſervant, and deſerves more than this poor tribute for his gratitude!

After heſitating a conſiderable time, (ſuſpicious, probably of my intention) Caſpar ſeparated from me. With the greateſt emotion I looked after him until he diſappeared. I was now left alone. Quite undetermined which road I ſhould take, I departed for ..ro.. On the day of my arrival, I heard that, in the evening, there was to be a maſquerade-ball; and a thought ſtruck me, which I immediately put in execution. I bought the habit of a Poliſh Jew, ornamented my chin with a large beard, coloured my eyebrows and face, and wandered thus towards Venice. The goods which I was poſſeſſed of, and my horſe, I turned into money, and ſecreted it, with ſome jewels in my belt. I did not doubt my ability to play my character faithfully; for I had been a long while in Poland, and had dealt with the Jews; inclination too, partly, as well as neceſſity, induced me

me to learn their language, in which I was so well skilled, that I have, even by the Jews themselves, been taken for one of their tribe. I travelled the greatest part of the way on foot, and about twenty miles from Venice entered an inn, where I met poor Caspar. He was sitting in a corner of the room, and seemed totally absorbed in thought. I was anxious to avoid being seen by him, and, for that reason, was about absenting myself from the room, when he came towards me, and asked me from whence I came? This made me bolder, and I told him the place where I had passed the night before. The word was scarcely out of my mouth, when he enquired if I had not seen his master? No, I answered quickly, and reflected afterwards, how unthinkingly it was done; because it gave him to understand that both of them were known to me. But it did not strike Caspar in the same way, and this *no* induced him to sit near to me, and to relate, with the most heart-felt sorrow, the history of his master. I reminded him to fulfil the last request of his benefactor, and heard to my astonishment, that he did not think me dead. I immediately invented a story which convinced him of the fact. He departed early the next day, and promised me that he would faithfully observe my request. He took an affectionate leave of me, without knowing who I was, which convinced me that I might live at Venice in security; for I hoped to render the Prince services of great consequence.

Before I arrived at Venice, I met with an accident, which had great influence on my conduct.

conduct. I ſtopped towards night-fall at an inn, which ſtood by the road ſide. I found there a Poliſh Jew, who was at the point of death. He no ſooner beheld me, than he addreſſed himſelf to me, and in a few minutes we entered into converſation, in which the greateſt confidence was diſplayed. By my compaſſion, and the little ſervice which I rendered him, I at laſt gained his utmoſt confidence. His illneſs increaſed; there was no hopes of his recovery. When we were alone, he called me to his bedſide, and I experienced what aſtoniſhed me beyond deſcription.

"I ſhall depart," he ſaid, "very ſoon to Paradiſe, there to repoſe in the laps of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob; but I have ſomething of great importance, which I cannot carry with me. You have gained my confidence, and for that reaſon, I ſhall deliver it to you."—I was obliged to ſwear that I would punctually perform all he required; at the ſame time, he aſſured me, that I ſhould be very generouſly recompenſed for it. He went on——

"The ...an confederates have ſent me with a letter,"—(I was obliged to take it from the lining of his cap,) "inſtead of me, do you deliver it."

How great was my aſtoniſhment, when I heard the Armenian deſcribed from head to foot! He did not know who he was; but he told me the place where he was to be found, at certain hours, ſo that I could not poſſibly miſtake him; he gave me, beſides, a ſign, which was unknown to any one elſe, and the anſwer

anſwer of the Armenian would clearly prove him the perſon. He mentioned, with the greateſt care, every particular ſeveral times, that I might not err. Although I did not want this precaution, I ſeemed to be very attentive to what he ſaid, that he might not ſuſpect that I had any knowledge of the Armenian. I experienced by the . . . an buſineſs a great ſupport to my plan; for I was anxious that they ſhould think me the real meſſenger, and not ſuppoſe that this man had merely ſent me. I conſidered I ſhould, on that account, be truſted with greater confidence.

It was, for the firſt time in my life, that I wiſhed for the death of a fellow-creature; but I certainly did in this inſtance; for I counted upon what I knew already, and believed for certain, that I ſhould ſave the Prince, as ſoon as I could light upon the Armenian; and this would all have been fruſtrated if the Jew had lived!

He died the following day. I performed, according to his requeſt, the laſt ſervice, and departed the next day. The letter I ſecreted in my cap. My heart beat with joy, and I offered up my thanks to heaven for its favour. thought I ſhould never reach the place of my deſtination.

I arrived, at laſt, in Venice; my heart palpitated. I took lodgings in a remote part of the city, at a ſmall inn. Before I arrived there, however, I was very much alarmed. As I ſtepped into a boat, I beheld Biondello in the ſame. I was fearful of being diſcovered, becauſe I could not truſt to my diſguiſe,

as

as there were ſo many ſly fellows in the city; although I avoided being detected by Caſpar, (who knew me ſo well.) But if a man ſtudies to avoid being known, the more he acts his part, the ſooner he is likely to betray himſelf. I was influenced by this conſideration, and therefore put a good countenance upon the matter. Biondello patted my ſhoulder, and gave me diſtinctly to underſtand, that my preſence was very dear to him. I might have given him ſome ſuſpicion, if he had not diſembarraſſed me, by enquiring ſomething of ... I anſwered him, that he muſt obſerve, I had made ſecreſy my rule of conduct. Inſtead of being angry with me for ſuch a reply, he was very ſatisfied with it. This peculiar conduct was very myſterious, but by degrees it cleared itſelf up.

To my great ſatisfaction I learned from him, that they were informed of my death, and believed it; for he aſked me if they had found my corpſe? I replied in the negative; alledging that it was impoſſible, on account of the ice that floated down the river—that I confirmed the report, every one will readily believe.

As ſoon as I arrived in the room which I had hired at the inn, I bolted the door, and opened the letter. The taſk was very difficult to perform; but I tried a variety of ways, and, at laſt, ſucceeded.

To my great diſappointment it was written in characters, and perfectly unintelligible. I made, however, ſeveral attempts to underſtand them, but in vain. I therefore copied them very

very exactly, in hopes, at ſome future time, to find the key to them. I cloſed the letter again, ſo that no traces of my having opened it could be perceived, and appeared the following day, at the appointed time, in St. Mark's Place. It was in the beginning of January; it was crouded with characteriſtic maſks † and ſpectators, who were enjoying the entertainment. I did not mix with them; I was upon the watch for the Armenian. I preſſed often through the croud, and ſought him in every corner, but he was not to be found. I reſolved to wait until night, and then return again to the appointed place upon the *Broglio*, cloſe to the church. The firſt perſon whom I ſaw was the Prince. He was in a domino, but his maſk, which I knew, as well as his appearance betrayed him. He ſtood before a pillar, upon which were a great many characters, and near him a maſk dreſſed like a magician. The latter had a long white beard that deſcended to his belt, to which was attached a black rope, apparently as a ſymbol of his profeſſion. In his right hand he held a ſtick, with

† I give this note for the information of thoſe of my readers, who are unacquainted with the manners and cuſtoms of Venice. The characteriſtic maſks are in Venice cuſtomary, from the time of the three kings, or wiſe men of the Eaſt, till the great feaſt day, which is the moſt lively in the whole year. All the ſtreets and ſquares are, at that time, full of maſks, and principally the St. Mark's Place. They repreſent all ſorts of characters, nations, manners, and cuſtoms. Thoſe who ſpeak, entertain themſelves with every one who will talk with them; they perſonate faithfully their adopted character, and being ſometimes men of wit, afford great entertainment. You frequently ſee amongſt them the *Improviſatori*, who are a kind of poets, famous for impromptu's.

with which he pointed to the pillar, and ſeemed to explain ſomething to the Prince, who liſtened very attentively. My curioſity prompted me to approach nearer, but it was uſeleſs, for they ſpoke ſo low that, in the tumult, no perſon could hear a ſingle word. The magician, at laſt, turned round and diſcovered me. I thought that he played his character for mere pleaſure, and was entertaining the Prince with his tricks, but I was greatly miſtaken. The more I reflected upon this event, the more I was convinced that it was deſigned for ſome particular purpoſe. The magician went leiſurely away. I had made it always a rule to notice the ſmalleſt circumſtance that concerned the Prince, and therefore followed him immediately: but he diſappeared, and I ſaw the Armenian coming towards me. I gave him the ſign and he anſwered it, bidding me, at the ſame time, follow him. I complied, and he conducted me into a dark ſtreet. He there unlocked the door of a houſe and we went together into a ſmall room. He took the letter from me, and overlooking it ſlightly, ſeemed to be ſatisfied with its contents. He put ſeveral queſtions to me on account of the ... buſineſs, which I anſwered ſo, that I did not give the leaſt cauſe to ſuſpect me. He deſired me to meet him again the next evening. He had parted from me, when he returned back, and addreſſed me in the Venetian language: he had before ſpoken, to my great aſtoniſhment, in ... language. My genius aſſiſted me, I ſhook my head, and told him in ... language, that I did not underſtand him. He ſmiled,

ſmiled, and ſaid he had forgotten himſelf. He was willing to remind me once more, not to miſtake the appointed hour the next evening. I promiſed him that I would not, and he went away. This circumſtance made me ſtill more cautious, and I maintained my character ſo well, that, when I quitted it it became very difficult for me not to uſe the tone and manners of a Poliſh Jew.

The time, until the hour arrived, paſſed very ſlow; at laſt it was announced by a neighbouring clock, and I went immediately to the appointed place. I found the Armenian there, who haſtily conducted me to a boat. Before we quitted it I was blindfolded, and when the bandage was taken from my eyes—gueſs my aſtoniſhment and terror!—for I found myſelf in the ſame hall where I had witneſſed the frightful appearances I have before mentioned* It was exactly the ſame, but I thought the aſſembly were more numerous. The hall was ſplendidly illuminated. The horror with which I recognized the fatal chamber was very viſible; for one of the aſſembly (by his ſpeech, I gueſs it muſt have been the Armenian, for, as they all appeared maſked, it was impoſſible to diſcover them,) told me to have courage. They ſaid alſo, in the Venetian language, that a Jew was a ſingular animal, for he bluſhed at every thing but what related to traffic.

The company took their ſeats at a long table, covered with black cloth. One of them ſeated himſelf at a little table, upon which there were pens, ink, and papers. He was probably

* See page 9.

probably the ſecretary of the ſociety; for he queſtioned me very minutely reſpecting the letter of . . . and to every circumſtance that was at all connected with it, and wrote down all my anſwers to his queſtions. I could eaſily gueſs by this, how much their ſucceſs depended upon my anſwers; for he read them over to me, adviſing me, at the ſame time, to alter what did not appear to me perfectly correct. I was too well prepared to drop any thing that might betray me; I had likewiſe time enough, as I was queſtioned by an interpreter, (I believe it was the Armenian himſelf,) to think of the beſt anſwers. They were perfectly ſatisfied with me, and gave me a conſiderable preſent. The ſecretary paid it to me. I do not know how it happened, but his maſk fell from his face. He endeavoured to put it on again as quick as poſſible, but I already had ſeen that it was—Biondello. The accident ſeemed to operate very forcibly upon the other members.

"This circumſtance," ſaid they, "muſt now coſt the poor Jew his life, to enſure our ſafety; for in ſuch caſes as theſe we cannot depend upon honour."

Damned principle! I thought, as the ſweat poured down my forehead. I had ſufficiently reſolution left to affect not to underſtand what was ſaid; for my attention was, to all appearance, directed to the money I had received. I heard their debates with apparent indifference, although they became ſo violent, that they did not at all regard me. The queſtion was, whether they ſhould murder me or not.

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It was utterly impoſſible for them to underſtand each other, the tumult was ſo great. The Armenian, who had remained quiet for ſome time, now gave a ſign with his hand, and there enſued immediately a deadly ſilence. —This would have convinced me, had I not gueſſed it before, that he was the leader of this ſecret ſociety. After a ſhort pauſe, he began :—

"To provide for our ſafety, is our firſt and ſacred duty. To maintain it, no ſacrifice would be too great; but I cannot conſent, on this occaſion, to put a man to death whoſe ſervices have been ſo eſſential to us.—I might ſay, and with juſtice, that it would militate againſt our plans, and deſtroy that which we have ſo carefully cheriſhed."

He pauſed—but no one anſwered him. I became more compoſed. He proceeded.

"And why ſhould we kill him?—becauſe he ſaw one (pointing to Biondelle) unmaſked! —Is he not in ſome meaſure a party concerned, and would it be poſſible for him, were this not the caſe, in the city of Venice, among ſo many thouſand people, to find out one ſingle perſon, whom he had but juſt glanced upon?—I moreover maintain, that the love of money, which is ſo natural to his nation, prevented his taking his eyes from the table. Our mere dreſs, without the maſk, is ſufficient to deceive any one who has not ſeen us in our ordinary habits."

They all agreed with him. Biondello did not, perhaps, recollect, that I had already ſeen and ſpoken to him in the boat; at leaſt he would not mention it; or he might, perhaps,

think I did not know him again. But to be certain of the fact, the Armenian aſked me if I ſhould be able to recognize the gentleman again, whom I ſaw a few minutes ago unmaſked? He put the queſtion to me in ſuch an inſinuating manner, that many would have anſwered—yes, to give them an idea of their powers for diſcrimination; but I knew too well how the buſineſs ſtood. I therefore made my anſwers accordingly. I affected not to know any thing of the matter; and, as I examined the money, I innocently aſked, what they particularly wiſhed me to do?

"See," ſaid the Armenian, "I am not miſtaken; he has not ſeen him!—He ſeemed to me too ſtupid to be a hypocrite, or to think of any thing but what leads to his intereſt."

Several of the others made the ſame obſervation, and ſeemed to regret, that they had not choſen a cleverer fellow to tranſact their buſineſs?

"Thoſe who have ſent him," (anſwered the Armenian) were prudent enough to ſee, that a taſk which did not require brilliant talents to execute, would have been faithfully and conſcientiouſly performed by him; and indeed there is not ſo much treachery to be looked for in men, that only know what they ſee, as in many others."

Stupid people are always the moſt honeſt, added a fat gentleman, (who probably could not boaſt of his abilities,) and laughed at this impromptu ſo much, that the table, on which his belly reſted, was very near falling down.

I was diſmiſſed, after they had inquired my place of abode, and commanded me to remain

there

there for further inſtructions. They conducted me again blindfolded to the canal. My joy, when I found myſelf alone and ſafe, I need not deſcribe; but the dreadful words, that they thought my death the only means of ſecurity, ſtill reſounded in my ears.

A whole month elapſed, in which I did not advance a ſtep nearer to the completion of my purpoſe, notwithſtanding my activity. My dreſs, and the promiſe which I had made to the Armenian, (and by which I hoped to make ſome important diſcoveries) became now the greateſt trouble to me; for it prevented me from inſtituting thoſe enquiries which were neceſſary to aid my plans. It was impoſſible for me, as I was ſo ſurrounded by ſpies, to learn any thing that at all concerned the Prince, without the greateſt hazard. From what I had heard and ſeen in the ſecret ſociety, I could only conjecture what they intended to do with the Prince; but it was impoſſible for me, an individual, to deſtroy the fabric, which was built and guarded by ſo many.—I was continually reflecting upon theſe circumſtances, which perplexed me very much. My ſleep alſo was interrupted by the moſt frightful dreams, and was more fatiguing than refreſhing. My imagination often pictured to me the Prince falling from a precipice. I caught him by his cloak, but it ſeemed to rend into a thouſand pieces, and I ſaw him daſhed upon the ground. I ſaw him ſtruggling in a rapid ſtream; I ran to his aſſiſtance, and was drowned with him. I carried him from a conflagration, and believed we were ſafe, when the flames ſuddenly ſurrounded us, and we were

conſumed. In ſhort, the moſt horrible images, which my diſturbed mind created, totally deprived me of my reſt, and, I muſt confeſs, my weakneſs made an impreſſion upon me the next day, that was not eaſily to be eradicated; although I had very little faith in dreams ‡.

I was ſitting one day (it was in the beginning of February, 17 . .) in my room, wrapt in reflection. The weather was very gloomy: flakes of ſnow, intermixed with rain beat againſt my window, as the wind howled round the houſe. I did not quit my room the whole day. A gentle rap at the door at laſt, rouſed me from my lethargy, and before I could ſpeak, I ſaw a man ſtanding before me with a ſhew-box upon his back. He aſked me if I did not chooſe to ſee his raree-ſhow? and without waiting for my anſwer, he ſet his apparatus before me. To get rid of him quickly, I gave him a piece of money, accompanied with a poſite aſſurance, that I had no deſire to ſee his raree-ſhew. I thought he would depart immediately, but I was very much miſtaken. He firſt looked at me and then the money. At laſt he ſaid,

"I never had ſo much given me before," and returned me the money.

"You muſt have made a miſtake!"

I ſtarted. I found I had given him, in my hurry, a ſmall gold piece—certainly too great a preſent

‡ I hope that no one of my readers will laugh at the Count O . . .'s weakneſs, which he himſelf ſo ſincerely confeſſes. If I had obſerved this beforehand, I ſhould have left out this little appendix, though I made it my duty to deliver every thing to the public as I have found it.

a preſent for my ſituation. He obſerved my embarraſſment

"Take the money back again," ſaid he "I will not profit by your error."

I did ſo; though I would readily have given it to him, through the fear of his being a ſpy. At that time the ſmalleſt circumſtances were to me of conſequence, and which I ſhould not formerly have troubled myſelf about.—I gave him a ſmaller piece. He thanked me, but entreated me very much to look into his box. To get rid of him, I was obliged to comply with his requeſt. He opened it, and I immediately ſtarted back—I beheld ſeveral ſcenes of the Prince's life, (which could be known only to a very few perſons,) ſo accurately repreſented, that he who had a knowledge of them, could not but recollect them. I looked ſignificantly at the man, he diſregarded me, and begged of me to ſee the other.—My aſtoniſhment now roſe to the higheſt degree. I ſaw the figure of a Poliſh Jew, which exactly reſembled me, with the following words under it, "The Count O . . . as a Poliſh Jew."—I loſt all my patience. In an angry manner I puſhed the box from me;—

"Are the agents of hell to be found every where?" I exclaimed, and ſtamped upon the ground.

"Not every where," ſaid the ſhow-man, as he graſped me by the hand.

"Who are you?" I cried, ſtarting with confuſion.

"Will you deſert your friend?

I ſtood for a moment ſpeechleſs. He drew a hand-

a handkerchief from his pocket, and wiped his face.

" Do you not know your friend Seymour ?"

It was him. My joy bordered upon frenzy. At a time, when I believed myſelf abandoned by all, when I could not even whiſper my ſentiments, for fear of being overheard and diſcovered, I found a friend, who had ever deſerved my veneration and love. No one that has not been in the ſame ſituation, can poſſibly have an idea of my ſenſations. Every misfortune operated upon me with double force, becauſe I had no friend to whom I could communicate my ſufferings. Now I was in poſſeſſion of that valuable treaſure, and preſſed him with affection to my heart. After the firſt burſt of tranſport was over, I begged of him to relate to me the cauſe which brought him hither, and what could have induced him to leave his native country ?—That he never would really have followed the trade of a ſhowman, was very clear to me.

" I wiſhed," he began, " as you will remember, to return to England. I travelled through Paris; and an accident obliged me to make a longer ſtay there than I at firſt intended. Several unforeſeen events reduced my finances, and I was obliged, until new remittances arrived, to deſiſt from purſuing my journey. In the mean time, I reſorted to all the public places of diverſion. I went one evening into a numerous ſociety. The bottle circulated briſkly, and the converſation became very agreeable.—At laſt a juggler came into the

the room, and begged to entertain us with his tricks.

"If they are worthy to be ſeen," ſaid a noble ſpark, "the ſociety will perhaps indulge you."

"To prove that they are, I will ſhew you a ſpeciemn," continued he, and "let your own judgment determine, whether I ſhall proceed or not." He performed ſome that were not common, and which excited our admiration.

The ſociety unanimouſly deſired him to go on, and every new trick he produced, procured him freſh applauſe. That he was an Engliſhman I immediately perceived by his accent, which made me attentive to him. It ſeemed to me, that his features were not unknown to me; but I could not immediately recollect who he was. Under the pretext, that I wiſhed to learn ſome of his tricks, and to countenance a countryman, I aſked him to call on me next morning, and to take his breakfaſt with me. He came, and in a little time I diſcovered, that I had been intimately acquainted with him from a boy. His name was Johnſon. My joy on this occaſion, was equal to yours, when you diſcovered me. I had been educated with him. His father had been tutor at my father's. His talents, and chearful heart, had acquired him the patronage of my father, and he ſuffered him to be my playfellow, and conſtant companion. All the privileges that I enjoyed, were alſo beſtowed upon him; he was inſtructed by the ſame maſters, and dreſſed as I was. I could not ſhew in my whole wardrobe a ſingle thing, which he did not alſo poſſeſs, and frequently,

I obſerved

I obſerved, that he excelled me. Being the only child, the tender love of my mother, (who was dead) had ſomewhat ſpoiled me, and I very often told the ſervants, haughtily, that I was the only heir to a large fortune. My prudent father employed this method, to ſhew me diſtinctly, that from merit alone our character muſt be eſtimated; and he gained his point by that means ſooner than he would have done by moralizing. I was at firſt angry with him, and hated Johnſon; but this did not laſt long, for, on account of his polite and good conduct, he acquired the eſteem of the whole family; and, by his ſincere love for me, I ſoon was conſcious of his good qualities. We became the beſt of friends, and endeavoured to excel each other in affection. He diſcovered a talent for mechanics. As I did not ſuffer him to eclipſe me in any thing, I alſo applied myſelf to the art; but, by his induſtry and perſeverance, he ſoon excelled me in that ſcience: I alſo was not ſo much intereſted with it as himſelf. My father let us want for nothing. He hired maſters who gave us the beſt inſtructions. The moſt expenſive inſtruments were alſo procured, and Johnſon ſoon finiſhed a variety of curious things. From thence he went on farther. A genius like his, was not ſatisfied with continuing in a beaten tract; he had a deſire always to ſee and ſtudy ſomething new. Mathematics, which we had often read with our tutor, who was a very clever and expert man, had diſcovered to him ſeveral departments of knowledge, which he now wiſhed to acquire. He made ſun-dials, he manufactured optical glaſſes, beſides electrical

trical machines, and never failed to execute any thing that appeared worthy of his attention. To be brief, (for I ſee clearly that the recollection of my paſt days, and the qualities of my friend, have made me rather too loquacious,) he became ſoon ſo expert and ingenious, that he often, although a boy of fourteen years, was the object of admiration; and, on that account, he was called the little Jack of all trades. He went on thus till he attained his twenty-ſecond year, when he, with great induſtry, applied himſelf to chemiſtry; in which he ſoon made many new and uſeful diſcoveries. About that time my father died, and he loſt a friend who had never let him want for any thing, but gratified his wiſhes at any expence. He now determined to travel. All my perſuaſions to detain him were fruitleſs. He ſtood firm to his intention, and I could not even obtain a permiſſion to travel with him. He even refuſed the conſiderable legacy which my father had left him. At that time I became angry, for I willingly would have ſhared with him my whole fortune, which he knew perfectly well; but I could not prevent him from executing his purpoſe. He would not even accept any money from me.

"Well then, you may go," ſaid I, and embraced him with unfeigned ſorrow.

It is impoſſible for me to diſcover what it was that induced him to deſert the man, who had acted towards him like a brother, and for whom he had the greateſt regard. I was not able to gueſs it. A letter which I, ſhortly after his departure, received from him, has diſcovered it to me. After a long apology for

his conduct, he ſays: "that it was impoſſible for him to live any longer upon the bounty of his friends." He conſidered my father's generoſity as an act of charity—but it was a wrong idea. "He, however, would endeavour to ſupport himſelf. The death of my father cauſed him to reflect upon circumſtances that never ſtruck him before. He would not have a ſecond benefactor, that he might not miſs him; and wiſhed not to expoſe himſelf to the danger of loſing his ſupport, when it had become impoſſible for him to exiſt without it. And if even he had not that to fear, he ſhould be deficient in his duty, if he expected that from another which he was able to procure for himſelf."—He added many other things; but this is ſufficient to give you an idea of a man, who will ſoon acquire your eſteem; of one who rather choſe to wander in the world, than to enjoy that reſt and affluence which he could not procure by his genius. I will not detain you longer with his hiſtory, though it is very remarkable. You will be pleaſed more, if you hear it from himſelf, and I am confident he will excite your admiration and reſpect. †

The days which we ſpent together at Paris were exceedingly agreeable. We related our hiſtories to each other, which indeed afforded a great fund of entertainment; for, ſince I received that letter, I had not either ſeen or heard from him. He ſaid, that he had written

† He has indeed afterwards related to Count O.... his hiſtory, which alſo came to my hands with theſe papear. It is very remarkable; and, ſhould I again have any leiſure time, and my readers have a deſire for it, I will publiſh it.

SCHILLER.

ten ſeveral times to me, but as I never obtained the letters, I could not anſwer them.

I related to him the events which happened to me at Venice with the Prince . . . After I had finiſhed, he ſuddenly jumped from his ſeat, and ran up and down the room, as if influenced by ſome extraordinary idea.

" We ſhall ſave him !" he exclaimed.—

" What, the Prince ?"

" Yes, the Prince !" he replied firmly.

How will that be poſſible ?

" My dear friend ! don't reflect upon that at preſent ; it wants but one deſperate attempt. I ſee the poſſibility of the meaſure. Judging from what I have heard, there is ſomething ſerious at the bottom of theſe tricks. Let us deſtroy the plans of malice, which will perhaps be the ruin of many thouſands, before they come to maturity."

Suppoſe they have in view ſomething more than cheating him of his money, do you not believe, that many are at work, and that reſiſtance would be madneſs ?

" Undoubtedly, open reſiſtance—but let us work againſt them where they do not ſuſpect us, and in a way, that they cannot perceive the machine, but only experience the effect of its operation. This, my friend we certainly are able to undertake. I am too well acquainted with the deceitful tricks in this world, which are publiſhed as wonders ; and if I can do nothing more than merely chace away the miſt from the eyes of the Prince, I may, perhaps, ſave him from being enveloped in their diabolical ſnares.

This propoſition was ſo noble, that, altho' it

it may prove fruitleſs, I conſented to it. When my remittances arrived, we made the beſt of our way to Italy. A trifling indiſpoſition, which affected my friend, retarded our journey for a little time. Johnſon requeſted I would diſmiſs my ſervants, and retain only one ſingle footman, who was ſufficiently faithful and prudent, not to diſcover any of our plans.

Johnſon diſguiſed himſelf and us ſo, that we were quite unknown; a precaution which was very neceſſary.—He alſo obſerved, that in our mean dreſs, we ſhould be able to make more obſervations than otherwiſe; for he maintained, that they were leſs ſuſpicious of the poor than the great. We took lodgings ſeparately, at different inns, to have a more ample field for the execution of our plans; we even went ſo far as to have ſeveral lodging-houſes, in which we alternately reſided, having firſt changed our dreſſes, and concealed our country, for we all ſpoke different languages with equal promptitude. By that means, dear O..., I ſucceeded in diſcovering you, notwithſtanding your diſguiſe."

"But how was that poſſible?" ſaid I, interrupting him.

"You betrayed yourſelf," he replied: "I lodged in the ſame inn that you did, and, by accident was put into the room over your's. If I awoke in the night, I conſtantly heard ſome one ſpeaking in your chamber. This made me attentive. I laid myſelf upon the floor of the room, and overheard, through a crack, all that you ſaid. I ſoon perceived that you was talking in your ſleep. You muſt have been

been disturbed very much by frightful dreams; for your exclamations were generally—Murder! Despair! Perish! Down! Down!—Several times I heard you mention the name of the Prince, and this induced me to presume that you were the man, whom I had such a great desire to see. I overheard you for several nights, and was at last confirmed in my opinion; for you spoke of things which no other person but yourself could possibly know. Has he not similar views with us, said I; knowing as I do, that he was such a trusty friend of the Prince, and loved him so much? Is he not endeavouring to be useful to the Prince in that disguise; because he has rendered it impossible, by undeserved treatment, to appear in his true form.

What!—exclaimed I, full of admiration—You have been told, then, how the Prince has treated me?

More than that, he answered. You shall soon be convinced from Johnson's letters, which I will communicate to you hereafter, and then went on—

However, I did not think proper to discover myself to you, as Lord Seymour, until I was fully convinced of the fact.

I was suspicious, although it was improbable, that you were a spy in that disguise for the purpose of betraying me: I was, therefore, obliged to act with the greatest precaution. For that reason I appeared in the character of a shew-man.

I had drawn, some time back, for my amusement, those scenes which I displayed to you,

you, and it immediately ſtruck me that they would be uſeful to me in this inſtance.

Leſt I ſhould be deceived, which muſt have appeared in your conduct, I kept back your portrait until the laſt, which inſtantly gave me to underſtand, that I was not wrong in my conjectures.

We were ſome time, ſaid Lord Seymour, without being able to accompliſh any of our plans, in ſpite of the greateſt exertions. Every evening we met together, and communicated to each other our diſcoveries, and planned what meaſures we were to take in future. But, although we thought ourſelves adepts at invention, we never could, by any ſtratagem, approach the Prince.

" A good idea muſt be executed, though it may be founded on a bad principle," ſaid Johnſon, " or all our undertakings will avail nothing, and our aſſiſtance probably arrive too late." For that reaſon he wrote a note to the Prince, in which he invited him to appear alone, at the dead of the night, in a certain ſolitary place. He conveyed it, unperceived, into the Prince's pocket. He had written it ſo artfully, that the Prince, no doubt, preſumed it came from the Armenian. The deſire he had to be farther acquainted with this myſterious being, from whom he had heard nothing for ſome time, made us certain that he would not refuſe this invitation. We were not deceived; he came. We hired two fellows to attack him, and came paſt as it were by accident. Johnſon was to run to his aſſiſtance. For appearance ſake, he ſtruggled with them, until they ran away at a noiſe made by

by myſelf and Mathias. Johnſon conducted the Prince home, and we went, as quick as poſſible, to our lodging*.

The ſucceſs of this event you will find in Johnſon's letters to me. They were ſent, to avoid all intercourſe with him, by a faithful waterman, to whom Johnſon delivered them for me, and by that means he alſo obtained my anſwers.

And thoſe letters, added the Count O... I will communicate to the reader from Lord Seymour, from a French tranſlation, which he made at my requeſt, as I did not underſtand the Engliſh language.

I have only omitted that which the public is already acquainted with from the preceding pages.

Here the thread will be again united, which the death of my friend ſeparated.

† I have omitted inſerting this event before, which my friend the Baron F..., in his relation, has ſlightly mentioned, becauſe I thought this the beſt place for it.

COUNT O...

LETTER

LETTER I.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

SEPTEMBER 17, **

I AM not able to recover myſelf from what I may juſtly call my extravagant happineſs. Friend, rejoice with me—All has ſucceeded to my utmoſt wiſhes, and I look forward with pleaſure to the time when the Prince will be freed from his enemies. My whole plan is fixed upon, and although every thing appears in confuſion, I hope, however, that time will produce the deſired effect. I pity the Prince from my heart. I ſoon diſcovered how he was ſituated. He has a good underſtanding, and an excellent heart; and ſhame to them who have ſo induſtriouſly laboured to ſpoil both.

But why do I communicate to you things which you know already better than myſelf? You may judge of the degree in which my happineſs made me quite abſent.

I ſhall be obliged to act with more caution in future. My plans were on the point of being deſtroyed; for Biondello came ſuddenly into my room as I was writing. It was fortunate that I heard him approaching: I had juſt time enough to ſecrete all my papers, and walk with indifference towards the window.

He

He did not ſeem to take any notice of me, but took his hat and cloak and went out, probably, upon ſome of the Prince's errands.

But I will now tell you every thing that appears to me of conſequence, that I may not again be interrupted; it would be impoſſible for me to connect my whole train of thoughts.

I conducted the Prince home, as you already know, under the pretext of protecting him. He permitted me to do it without heſitation; for he did not ſeem to have recovered from his fright, into which the circumſtance of meeting two ruffians, inſtead of the Armenian, had thrown him. He did not ſpeak until we entered his room. He then introduced me to one of his barons and Biondello, who were in the ſame room, as the ſaviour of his life. He thanked me heartily, and told me to aſk of him any favour.—I conſidered for ſome time, and at laſt told him, that he would ſhew me the higheſt mark of friendſhip, if he would keep me in his ſervice; for I had ſometime ago loſt my maſter, and had endeavoured, in vain, to get a new one. I gave myſelf out for an Engliſhman of a good family; I told him that my eldeſt brother, during my minority, ſpent my fortune, and forced me to the neceſſity of ſeeking for ſubſiſtence in the humiliating capacity of a ſervant. By the laſt part of my ſtory, I hoped to excite his pity towards me; for I am confident that we feel always more compaſſion for thoſe who are reduced from affluence to poverty, than for ſuch as from their birth are accuſtomed to ſervitude. If he ſympathiſed with me, I could very ſoon claim his confidence.

dence. In that point I ſucceeded to my ſatiſfaction in a ſhort time. But what I am rejoiced at moſt is, that he has made me his chamberlain; in which ſituation I ſhall often have an opportunity of being alone with him. He would not, he ſaid, degrade the ſaviour of his life by a livery; and regretted only, that it was not at preſent entirely in his power to make me independent of the world.

As chamberlain, I am to have a ſmall room to myſelf; but this is not yet quite ready. Biondello has permitted me, for that time, to make uſe of his. He is very friendly towards me; and, although I acknowledge his civility for appearance ſake, yet I do not truſt him; for he has ſo much flattery and cunning about him, that I fear he has very little honeſty left.

Several days after.

THANK God, I am in poſſeſſion of my little room, and begin to write to you again, which was till now impoſſible for me to do, Biondello watched me ſo narrowly. I muſt not attribute that to the Prince, becauſe he is never miſtruſtful. Yet I will not judge harſhly. I have not yet converſed with the Prince; but as my cloaths are not come from the tailor's, I will aſcribe it to that circumſtance; but if when I am equipped he ſhuns me, I muſt conclude that there is ſomething more at the bottom of it.

One day later.

THIS morning, early, I obtained at laſt my dreſs; and you are not able to imagine with

with what apparent rapture I put them on. Biondello was preſent, and gave me joy, on my exchanging my old cloaths for ſuch rich ones. But whilſt I rejoiced to think how I had ſucceeded, he believed it aroſe from a childiſh love of finery, and this, I have no doubt, made him aſſure me that they fitted me extremely well. I let him enjoy his error, and to confirm his opinion, I took every part into my hands, and contemplated it with a fooliſh pride, ſmiled at myſelf in the glaſs, and neglected nothing that could convey to him the idea of my being a ſtupid clown. To make the joke complete, I told him, that I intended now to take a walk, to ſhew myſelf to the people, which I had not courage to do in my old coat. I intend, by that manœuvre, to ſend you my firſt letter, and I am ſorry if you have been at all embarraſſed on my account.

LETTER

LETTER II.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

OCTOBER 1.

BIONDELLO is the moſt cunning fox in the world; but I have, in ſpite of his ingenuity, deceived him. By the confidence which he ſeems to put in me, he watches me ſo cloſely, that if I had not taken great care, I ſhould certainly have betrayed myſelf; but I have at laſt made him believe that I am a perfect unſuſpecting blockhead, and indeed it is the opinion that I wiſh him to have of me, in my preſent ſituation. He ſtudied to find out in me more than I choſe to let him know; and the trouble he gave himſelf to accompliſh this, is a ſure proof that in him there is ſomething more than the mere ſecretary of the Prince. The Prince has a very high opinion of him. He does not conſider him as his ſervant, but his truſty friend. I pretended not to underſtand a word of the Venetian language (and Biondello thinks he is quite ſure of it, for he has tried many experiments to prove the fact), and all thoſe who do not ſpeak Engliſh, I converſe with in French; they are not at all ſuſpicious of me, but often talk about things when I am preſent, which, if

they

they knew I underſtood them, they would certainly conceal from me. As they look upon me to be of no conſequence in oppoſition to their ſchemes, and the Prince likes me to be about his perſon, I now conſtantly attend him, and he enjoys the advantage, as he ſuppoſes, of not being obliged to ſend me out of the room if he is converſing with any one, which he is always obliged to do with his other ſervants, as they underſtand the languge.

Laſt night, as I was undreſſing him in his room, Biondello was preſent. After converſing upon ſome indifferent topics, they began about me. Biondello thought my qualities were ſtupidity, ſincerity, and honeſty. The Prince ſaid that he was pleaſed with my perſon, and thought the qualities Biondello ſpoke of were better than good intellects, united with a bad heart.

"He is alſo courageous," ſaid he, "and to that I owe my life, at leaſt my freedom."—

Biondello underſtood this hint. He altered his tone immediately; for, at firſt, he was very ſatirical. He might have forgotten himſelf. He now talked a great deal about me, and ſaid many handſome things of me to flatter the Prince. From that they turned to the ſubject of the attack made upon the Prince, and cracked their brains for a long time to diſcover the perſon who hired the bravos to murder him. That the note did not come from the Armenian, Biondello maintained, for it was not likely, that if he meant to attempt the Prince's life, he would execute his plans with ſuch temerity. The Prince agreed with him, and the only doubt then remaining was, who could

could poſſibly have views upon his perſon, if it was not him, who had already given him to underſtand ſo. Biondello pointed out to him the poſſibility, that his own court had done it to lay hold of him. It immediately ſtruck the Prince ſo forcibly, that he broke out into a moſt violent paſſion. It is true all circumſtances united, ſerve to ſtrengthen this ſuppoſition; for I learned by the converſation, that the Prince had lately received a very rigorous letter from thence; and Biondello reminded him of the converſation which paſſed at St. George *. This circumſtance apparently confirmed the fact in the Prince's mind. His expreſſions I will not repeat here. I do not know if I am wrong, but it ſeemed to me as if Biondello was pleaſed with the idea, that the Prince deſpiſed his court: for he knew the kind of language that would increaſe the Prince's anger, without letting him ſuſpect his cunning. This man poſſeſſes dexterity ſufficient to guide any perſon where he pleaſes, without his being able to perceive the thread with which he leads him. He ſometimes appears quite different to that which you would ſuſpect. Towards me he did not always act with ſuch precaution; for that reaſon I diſcovered more of his character than I otherwiſe could have done. He had ſtrict orders from that hour to have his wits about him, and alſo to intercept the letters of Baron F . . . (a cavalier of the Prince's houſehold) to Count O . . . to ſee if they would lead to any thing ſatisfactory.

" For,

* See page 139.

"For," added the Prince, "this F .... ſeemed ſome time back diſſatisfied with my continuing here."

What this will lead to, I am not able to ſee at preſent. I wiſh I could but give a hint to Baron F .... to be upon his guard, for if Biondello conſpires againſt him, he muſt fall a ſacrifice to his plans.

Several days after.

BIONDELLO every day puts more and more confidence in me, and it is, in all probability, becauſe I communicated to him, with the greateſt accuracy, all that I hear and ſee; but you'll underſtand, I tell him only thoſe things which he ought to know.—I ſeem to keep no ſecret from him. He often liſtens with the greateſt patience to the ridiculous nonſenſe with which I endeavour to entertain him; and he generally compliments me upon my taleats, and good conduct in truſting to him with ſuch ſincerity. Indeed, the method I have taken is the beſt way to inſure his countenance. But he is miſtaken in my character, notwithſtanding the accurate knowledge he poſſeſſes of mankind. In every converſation I diſtinguiſh more and more what an opinion he has of me; indeed he begins to give me little commiſſions, but which at preſent do not conſiſt of any thing farther than to have a watchful eye, in his abſence, upon the Prince's conduct, and to communicate to him all what I have perceived and heard. And, to enable me to do this effectually, he takes

care

care that every little new trait in my character is reported in a favourable manner to the Prince, who becomes every day more and more attached to me, and prefers me to all his other ſervants; indeed he has of late appeared very ſuſpicious of them, which is, in all probability, a contrivance of Biondello's, in whom he puts the moſt unlimited confidence.

That I ſhould ſucceed ſo well, and in ſo ſhort a time, I did not imagine; it exceeds my moſt ſanguine expectations. I will ſet it down as one of my great maſter-pieces of art, if I am able to outwit this Biondello.

A certain Marquis, by name Civitella, has juſt left the Prince. I have often ſeen him here. I queſtion whether he ſeeks any thing beyond the honour of the Prince's friendſhip. They ſeem very intimately acquainted, and indeed I cannot blame the Prince for that; for this Marquis has many good qualities, and ſeems to ſtudy to diſplay them to advantage in the preſence of the Prince. However, I have heard the Prince many times promiſe to pay him money; and, from what I could collect, it is not a ſmall ſum.—Then the Prince is in debt—it cannot be otherwiſe, from his preſent extravagance.—But how are they to be paid, when I know, for certain, that he receives nothing from his court? Is not this a diabolical plan of the Armenian, to detain him, and ſucceed in his deſigns upon him? I adviſe you, friend, to provide yourſelf with money, which may be had immediately upon your orders. I leave it entirely to your prudence,

how

how you will accompliſh this neceſſary object without betraying yourſelf.

I muſt tell you of a diſcovery which I have juſt made, and which I think of conſequence: —The Prince generally goes out towards evening, and this happens very often; and, to day I hear, he belongs to a certain ſociety, called the Bucentauro. Could you not learn ſomething about this ſect; and whether we muſt alſo direct our attention to that. He was ſcarcely gone, when I haſtened to my room to write to you. I had juſt finiſhed the laſt line as Biondello came in. I muſt tell you that he does not ſuſpect any thing when he finds me engaged in writing. I have told him that I have a great delight in making verſes, and on that account I have always a poem lying at my ſide, which, as ſoon as I hear any perſon coming, I put in the place of the letter; and, to play my part well, I affect to tranſlate it to him, (for he does not underſtand Engliſh) and repeat the moſt ſtupid nonſenſe with a kind of poetic mania. This time he had not a deſire to hear my poetry, but intreated me to defer reading it to a future opportunity, and go with him to his room; ſo that he might be preſent when the Prince arrived. This I did, and I was obliged to report to him all that had happened to the Prince during his abſence. When we were in the height of our converſation, there came into the room an old man. He was bent low beneath his years; but there was an expreſſion in his countenance which ill accorded with his age. His voice alſo was full and regular, and he had not that trembling pronunciation which generally affects aged

people. Biondello told me that he was his relation. I was going to abſent myſelf, but he entreated me to ſtay; as his couſin, he ſaid, did not underſtand any other language than the Venetian, and as, beſides, he had nothing of conſequence to communicate to him. The old man looked at me with ſuſpicion, but I buſied myſelf with a book, and took no notice of him.

"Do you know for certain that he does not underſtand us?" ſaid he, "Are you ſure that he is not an impoſtor?"

Biondello told him he need not be under any apprehenſion.—He deſcribed my character to him, and ſaid, that in ſpite of my ſtupidity he could make me of ſervice to him.

"I will believe you," he exclaimed, "for I am acquainted with your talent in the knowledge of mankind, and which makes you worthy of your dangerous employment. The greater part of the fabric, which I have curiouſly raiſed, reſts upon your ſhoulders. Do not looſe, for heaven's ſake, at the moment of its accompliſhment, that firmneſs which will prevent our being buried in the ruins. I know your caution and foreſight are very great. Think alſo on the reward you will gain, when we behold your giant work completed. I expect letters from . . . and we are then at the ſummit of our wiſhes; for the Prince will not make any reſiſtance."

"The journey then, which you undertook, has been of great ſervice?"

"Is there any thing impoſſible? Had I not found great difficulties in perſuading the Court of . . d . . to agree in our plans, the mountains,

tains, which now appear before us, ſhould long ago have diſappeared. I did not miſtruſt you, believe me. Though it were ſo, I ſhould forgive you; for how could you be able to penetrate into my ſchemes? — You believed that many things were the effect of chance, which I contrived and put into execution.— Can you ſuppoſe that the Prince of . . d . . . came to Venice for nothing?"

"No one can poſſibly imagine what ſteps your prudence takes."

"You muſt know then, that he came hither at my requeſt, to entice our Prince to a licentious manner of living, and to bring him, by that means, nearer to the point on which my plans are centered."

"Pardon me, when you could ſo eaſily have communicated with the Court upon the conduct of the Prince, why was that journey neceſſary?"

"Is it not eaſier to remove a Prince from the place where it is likely his penetrating eyes would have pried into our deſigns, than to make thouſands privy to our plans. I had only to write to the Prince to come, for we had ſettled it ſome time ago.—I knew he was a member of the order of . . . I am one of them. I wrote to the ſuperiors of the order, and they contrived to ſend meſſages to him, which made him believe he was invited to ſee the internal part of the ſanctuary."

"I am aſtoniſhed! As often as I ſee you, you always appear to me in a new and extraordinary character: hear then farther. The ſecond ſtep was not difficult for me to take. The Count P . . . is firſt miniſter at the Court

of . . d . . . For appearance ſake, the feeble King wears the crown, but P . . . governs: he is the machine by which every thing is regulated. This P . . . has long been my friend. I was acquainted with him whilſt he was ambaſſador at Rome, and I propoſed him for a member of the order of . . . At that time the ſketch of the plan, which we are now about to execute, was ſhewn to him, and which was always the ſame, although accident has changed the perſons by whom it was to have been accompliſhed. I wrote to him that every thing was ready, and we waited for him only to complete it. Nothing was eaſier for him, than to perſuade his avaricious monarch to let out his troops to conquer . . . to which his council had long before directed their attention. P . . . met me at . i . . to bring me the happy account of his ſucceſs, and the King ſuſpected that he was gone to conclude a promiſed alliance."

"Do I dream?—Is it poſſible to play thus with Kings?" replied Biondello."

"I did not expect ſuch a queſtion from you," ſaid the old man. "Do you not know, that one may deceive Kings much eaſier than other people; becauſe flattery ſucceeds to a miracle with them; ſpreading, as it were, a miſt before their eyes? And if they are prudent enough to diſregard that illuſion, we muſt then give them amuſements to which they are attached, and never deprive them of any thing, but what relates to ſtate affairs, for fear of incurring their diſpleaſure †.

"And

† I have written every thing down as I found it, and I do

" And does not the King of . . d . . know for what purpoſe he lends his powers ?"

" Is the architect obliged to explain his whole deſign to a maſon, who is employed to place ſtones and execute the work, which probably he would not even then underſtand ? He works for his daily bread, and if he obtains that, he is ſatisfied.—Can the King of . . d . . deſire more, than the acquiſition of . . . which muſt be of great value to him, as it is immediately connected with his own territories ?—It is the object which he ſets his heart upon. —However, to ſatisfy your curioſity would take up that time in which I hope to hear more important accounts of the Prince."

Biondello replied : " Every thing is in the ſame ſtate as when you left us ; and I have only here and there added a little where it ſeemed neceſſary." Here Biondello related to him the event of that evening in which the Prince was attacked, and concluded with ſaying, that he had made uſe of that circumſtance to enrage the Prince more againſt his Court ; for he made him believe, it was certain, that the Court intended to impriſon him.

The old man ſeemed ſatisfied with that, and immediately replied, " How is he as to his manner of thinking ?"

" He approaches more and more to a free-thinker," replied Biondello, " and I am confident

do not know how far this may be true. But, if I may ſpeak my opinion, it does not appear to me quite certain ; for, I have ſeen in my life but one King, and he ſeemed to me ſo full of wiſdom and majeſty, (probably the old King of P . . ., Fr. II.) that I would have ſworn that his very looks would have awed thoſe that dared to inſult him.

fident but little is wanting to render him ſuch entirely."

"Then," ſaid the old man, "my machines act as ſucceſsfully as I can wiſh."

"How! was this alſo your work? Will a free-thinker believe in apparitions? Will he bend his neck to the yoke of a religion which puts reſtraint on him, and which it is your opinion he will accept?"

"I ſee you are very little acquainted with the human heart. To ſhake a belief, which fundamentally reſts upon conviction, is very difficult; but to guide the opinion of a ſceptic is ſufficiently eaſy. This may ſeem a paradox, but I will prove it to you:—Man—let him wear a crown, or the rags of a beggar—wants always a ſupport in trying circumſtances; and if he deſpairs at all, he ſighs after comfort with double anxiety. And what offers to him the wiſhed-for conſolation but religion?—Hence, it is evident, that the religions of thoſe nations who are ſtill, as it may be ſaid, in a ſtate of ignorance, have infinitely more ceremonies than thoſe that are enlightened. The Prince rejected this ſupport, and launched boldly into the gulph of ſophiſtry. The more he meditates upon it, the more it will perplex him. As he ſinks beneath inquiry, he will greedily devour any new idea that tends to diſſipate the former. And is not the Catholic religion, in which there are ſo many ſaints that he cannot doubt his preſervation, exactly calculated for the purpoſe?"

"How! Do I hear right? Did you not extol the principles of doubt, and yet you called ſcepticiſm a tottering fabric? Have you alſo been-

been converted, and have you found a greater conſolation in contemplating the ſcapulary, than in your former rational way of thinking? Why do you let appearances ſo often deceive you?—Is not the tool that is uſed by the mechanic for the moſt curious purpoſes, when placed in the hand of a child, a dangerous inſtrument, with which it innocently wounds itſelf? Does not ſolid food affect the feeble ſtomach, whilſt it operates not upon a ſtrong one? And will not a child throw from it the inſtrument with which it has wounded itſelf, whilſt the artiſt would not ſell it for any price?—Will not the perſon of a weak ſtomach, avoid food that is diſagreeable to it, whilſt the hungry healthy man enjoys it? But I will argue otherwiſe.—What is belief, and what is diſbelief? Does not the Mahometan think that his belief is founded upon principle and authority, and call the Chriſtian an unbeliever; whilſt the latter thinks the ſame of him? Hence then, we may conclude, that belief depends merely upon conviction, the want of which diſbelief. — This is ſelf-evident."

"You think, then, a fundamental belief is that of which we feel convinced, and alſo that men may entertain different opinions upon the ſame ſubject, and yet be called believers."

"They both undoubtedly think that they are ſo."

"Is not that an argument againſt you?—If the Prince thinks that his belief is fundamental.—"

"Then it would be difficult to wean him from it, but he does not think ſo?"

"And

" And yet he adheres to it with firmneſs, and defends his opinion with the greateſt warmth."

" Let me aſk you one queſtion :—Does conviction always carry with it tranquillity of mind ?"

" I thought that they were inſeparable."

" And do you find it with the Prince ? Have you not often told me, that, when free from diſſipation, he was diſſatisfied with himſelf? He is like a child who is pleaſed with the brightneſs of a knife, which he throws away as ſoon as he is hurt by it ; he is the invalid whoſe ſtomach cannot digeſt heavy food ; who guards againſt it as ſoon as he perceives the evil ; and then, in order to rid himſelf as ſoon as poſſible of his former diſorder, adopts a lighter diet as neceſſary. The Prince thinks that many of thoſe things are beneath his notice, which men ſeize upon with ſo much eagerneſs, and from which continual reflection, and an unbiaſſed mind alone can deliver us. And I declare to you, that in a ſhort time, he will believe in ſpirits and apparitions. I do not know him ; I do not know the human heart, if his former bigotted ideas of religion do not return with double force. Muſt not this conſequence obtrude itſelf upon him as ſoon as his experience teaches him that apparitions do exiſt ; that his preſent philoſophy could not once make him diſbelieve this, which is the moſt trifling and unimportant point that a man can doubt of. Would it not much leſs be able to eradicate that idea from his mind which education, cuſtom, and our own partiality, have concurred to proclaim by an internal voice ?

voice? Will he not paſs from profeſſed free-thinking to the contrary extreme, and thank the man who leads him to it?"

Biondello was ſilent, and appeared perfectly convinced. The old man roſe ſlowly from his arm chair; Biondello then told him ſomething which I was not able to underſtand diſtinctly; but I learned that he was to prepare the machines; for, the day after to-morrow, there was to be a grand feaſt.

Well, friend, what do you think of this converſation? The leaſt that we can infer from it is, that Biondello is concerned in the plot againſt the Prince. Who can poſſibly be that old man?—Is it not merely the gaſconade, which is always peculiar to thoſe ſort of people, becauſe they by that method keep their underlings (of whom, in all probability, Biondello is one) in an aſtoniſhing dread of their power. So that I know not what to think of his making uſe of the . . d . . for the execution of his plan. And for what purpoſe was this employed? How can it have any reference to the Prince? How does this all agree with . . .?—Ha! I have a thought—What if the intend to create the Prince, King of . . .?—Perhaps this may be the intention of the Court of . . d . . .—I muſt confeſs ſincerely, that, at preſent, all is a perfect myſtery to me.

LETTER III.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

October the 4th.

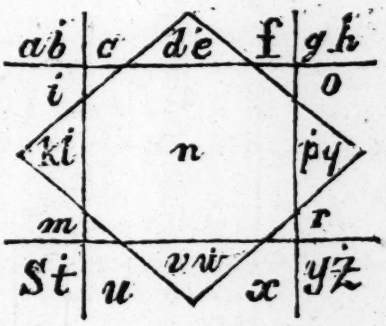
THE Prince is invited to-morrow to a feaſt, which is given in St. Benedetto, and, as I underſtand, merely on his account. His whole houſehold (except one) will be preſent! and who this one ſhould be, is a matter of great diſpute. The lot will probably fall to Biondello, becauſe he has pretended for ſome time to be indiſpoſed. I call it a pretence, becauſe, in my preſence, he does not appear ſo, at leaſt leſs than when the Prince is preſent. He will, perhaps, as ſoon as we are gone, employ his time in the preparation of the machines, of which the old man ſpoke. His pretended indiſpoſition prevents ſuſpicion, and makes it more probable. And may it not be poſſible that this banquet is the idea of the old man? I ſhall have a watchful eye upon him, and, if poſſible, will remain at home.

October the 5th.

I KNOW not what to make of the Prince to-day. He roſe very early, looks pale and haggered, but ſtudiouſly ſeeks to hide it; and is diſſatisfied if we appear to obſerve it. It is the ſame with Baron F... and Biondello. They

They are all ſilent, but the Prince laughs at them; yet I can obſerve that his mind is not eaſy. —Perhaps he has ſeen an apparition. It is probable, although I cannot diſcover the truth*.

The whole houſe are gone to St. Benedetto, and I am the only inhabitant in this large building. A freezing horror ſurrounds me. My character, as I informed you, was miſtaken by Biondello, and he begged of the Prince to accompany him. I am glad he is not here; for his careleſſneſs has thrown into my hands his pocket-book filled with letters. He left it in his great-coat pocket. It contains, to all appearance, nothing of conſequence, but I will not omit to ſecure any thing that, perhaps, at a future period, may be of great importance. I though I ſhould diſcover ſomething more when I found it, but I was deceived, for there were only ſome little ſongs, poems, and love-letters. I was about to return it to its place, when I reſolved to ranſack it once more, and behold I diſcovered a ſecret pocket; in which there was the following figure:—



* The reader knows it already by the relation of Baron F... and for that reaſon I omit the reſt here.

Annot. of the Count O...

It appeared to me to be the key to ſome private writing, that may one day or other fall into our hands, and that you will take particular care of it I am confident.

Several of the Prince's houſehold are returned, and in great conſternation. It is ſaid the Prince has killed the Marquis Civitella, and is fled. The reaſon for this raſh act I know not. God only knows how this unfortunate affair will end!

THE CONTINUATION OF COUNT O...

AS ſoon as I had read this, the letter which the Jew gave me for the Armenian came into my mind. I ſought it, and found that the figure was indeed the key to the hieroglyphics. I haſtened immediately to Lord Seymour, to inform him of this acquiſition. We ſat ourſelves down, and, with that key, very eaſily unravelled the whole. And to gratify the curioſity of the reader, I ſhall give the contents of the letter, and join the key to it in the tranſlation.

*Statim, ſi religionis romano-catholicae eſt membrum, & regimen ***æ accepit, pro noſtro etiam habebimus domino, & unum ſolummodo verbum tunc ſatisfaciet, ut fiat re vera, & nos — —*.*

Our

* The remaining characters which the letter contained I omit, becauſe by thoſe already tranſcribed, the views of the Count O... are explained. I ſhall alſo here ſubjoin the Engliſh tranſlation.

Note of the German Edition.

" All

Our ſurpriſe at the contents was beyond conception—the execution of the ſcheme depending merely upon one word too. And what will be the conſequence if the Prince ſhould be King of ...? The old man ſaid himſelf, that theſe were the only means to accompliſh the plan—and what could that plan be? —No other than that which would ſhake monarchies to their foundation, or totally ſubvert them. And if the Prince ſhould obtain the crown of ... what would happen.—Is there not beſides him a ſucceſſor? Now I perfectly underſtand the ſignification of theſe words, "Wiſh yourſelf ſucceſs Prince, he is dead." I now perfectly recollect with what emphaſis the Prince repeated thoſe words. (As F... has written to me) I was ſeized with horror.

"Friend," ſaid I to Lord Seymour, "let us not proceed in this buſineſs—what are we againſt ſo many; how ſhall we able to ſwim againſt the ſtream?"

"We will do it as long as our powers laſt," he anſwered me reſolutely.

"Suppoſe

- -

"All that you deſired is prepared to the greateſt nicety, and ..... inski is chief of the party; a man of great firmneſs and valour, who is beloved by all. He is ſatisfied with your promiſes, and wiſhes, as we all do, very much that the ... Prince may become our King. As ſoon as he has embraced the Roman Catholic religion, and has obtained the ... crown, we ſhall immediately look upon him as our regent, and one ſingle word will then he ſufficient to make him our ſovereign, and us - - - - - - - - -

" Suppoſe they are detected, and we are involved in the danger ?"

" Then we ſhall have the ſatisfaction of knowing that we have done all that we poſſibly could do, which will ſweeten our hours, whether breathed out in a priſon or a palace."

" But is it poſſible, that he can have that conſolation, who throws himſelf through caprice into danger ?"

" We are not in that ſituation.—When the lives of thouſands, or at leaſt their happineſs, is at ſtake, no danger is too great to brave, if there is any probability of ſucceeding."

" And is this the caſe ?

" It is."

" How, friend, can you effectually ſubvert power ? Can you hinder a band of rebels from leading away the thoughts of the Prince, when they are attracted by force ? Has he not already done what they at ... deſired him to do ? Will not every action now become eaſy to him, when he conſiders that he can receive forgiveneſs of his ſins after every wicked deed ?

" Friend, you do not conſider that if our plans fail, there is ſtill one left ? Have you no idea of the power of the ſtate inquiſition here ? If we diſcover only half of what we have heard to be true, every thing is loſt. Will they not fear, and with juſtice, that in that ſecret ſociety are alſo manufactured plans againſt the republic ; and that they wiſh the Prince to aſſiſt them in the execution of their ſchemes ? You muſt conſider alſo, that we

cannot

cannot be detected if we inform through the *Bocche Parlanti**.

" But what will become of the Prince? Gracious Heaven!—If we ſhould be the means of forcing the ſword of juſtice to be drawn againſt him.

" The Prince is excuſeable—whatever he has done, his rank will be taken into conſideration. Puniſhment is not inflicted with that ſeverity upon men of high birth, as it is upon the meaner claſs of mankind. But let the worſt come—Is it not better that *one* man, even though a Prince—ſhould die for the people, than that multitudes ſhould periſh on his account?—And though the mine in its exploſion ſhould even ſhatter us with the reſt, from our aſhes there will ſpring flowers which muſt make future generations revere our memory.

Every one of my objections made the Engliſhman more firm; and I was at laſt convinced that he was right, although I ſuffered much in the encounter. I ſuppreſſed my tears with the hope of a better iſſue to our plan than that which we ſuppoſed; and ſought, as much as I could to perſuade myſelf of its being practicable, though I acknowledged the feeble foundation upon which it reſted. I truſted principally

* Theſe *Bocche Parlanti* are large lions jaws, of marble; there are many of them to be ſeen in the Palace of St. Mark. All ſecret denunciations are put in them, and over every one is written the kind of accuſation which you are to deliver. The State Inquiſitors examine them every evening, and take into conſideration the letters they find in them. By that means it is eaſy to remain unknown; for he who expects a recompenſe for his information, detains a piece of it to ſhew it.

pally to Johnſon's prudence, which was evinced in a great degree by his letters.—With the greateſt anxiety I haſtened to my lodgings, and read the following letters written by him. Two of them I have omitted entirely, as they did not contain any thing but what has already been related. And if I found in the others what I wiſhed for, the reader will eaſily diſcover it.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

JOHNSON TO LORD SEYMOUR.

OCTOBER 25.

SINCE the events which have of late happened to the Prince, he is quite changed. He flies the ſocieties which he formerly ſought.—He locks himſelf up in his room, and appears gloomy and melancholy. I do not wonder at this; but it has taken too ſtrong a hold of him, for I am fearful that he ſhould lay violent hands on himſelf.—Would you ſuppoſe that, under the pretence of being ill, he has ſent away the Marquis, who ſhews ſo much tender care for him, and is devoted to the completion of his happineſs, and who was a little while ago his moſt intimate friend. And will you believe me when I tell you, that Biondello is not now ſo frequently about his perſon, and that his love for ſolitude is equal to his maſter's. Neceſſary as this might be under other circumſtances, it now makes me more anxious for him. He has ſo entirely ſeparated himſelf from the world, that he ſeems cold even to his boſom friends: a ſtate of mind by which ſuicide muſt be encouraged, and leſs reſolution be required to commit it. That this is already the caſe with him, I experienced laſt

niht.

night. I was alone with him in his room. This happens now very often; for, as ſoon as it grows dark, he does not like to be alone, he therefore obliges me to be with him, as he believes he can vent his ſorrows in my preſence, without my being able to underſtand him, and that I cannot, from ſtupidity, learn any thing from his geſtures. This dread of being alone in the evening, which he was before not accuſtomed to, gives me (beſides the advantage of obſerving him,) hopes that he may, perhaps, even yet, adopt other ſentiments; for, in my opinion, ſolitude by candle-light muſt rather ſtrengthen than alter ſuch a reſolution. And I think, that as long as one yet fears ſomething, or which is the ſame thing, thinks one has ſomething to loſe, let it be ever ſo trifling, which one would not willingly be deprived of, the ties are not entirely ſevered which unite us to this mortal life.

Now to the buſineſs.—I was alone with him one evening, when he reſted his head upon his hand, and ſat for ſome time almoſt without animation. He ſighed deeply, and lamented that he had ever been born. At laſt he roſe, and opening his writing-deſk, took out of it a red ribbon. He preſſed it to his heart and lips. Oh! that I were able to deſcribe his look. It pierced me to the heart—I will give you, to the beſt of my recollection, his ſoliloquy.

" Oh! thou only remains of my beloved Thereſa!" (the name of the Greek lady). He preſſed the ribbon to his lips, as the tears burſt from his eyes. The ſtreſs which he laid upon theſe words, and his deep ſorrow almoſt deprived me of my ſenſes. I never ſaw a man

in

in ſuch a terrible ſituation. His eyes were wildly expreſſive, and his voice hollow and monotonous. I believed his feelings had almoſt driven him to inſanity. The burthen ſeemed too heavy for his ſoul to bear. He remained for ſome time fixed like a ſtatue:—at laſt he ſpoke.

"My Thereſa! my all! my .... Ah! how can this miſerable earth afford any relief to my ſufferings!—this pitiable ſtate which cannot produce one ſingle being who is perfectly happy. Which could murder a Thereſa!—an angel!—murder!—murder!—murder!" (This he ſpoke with dreadful agitation)—"Ha! what prevents me from breaking the bands which ſeparate me from her?—Who can blame the lion that burſts the chains which deprive him of his liberty, and which ſeparates him from his young? But can I find her again! Irrecoverably loſt! Irrecoverably! I would ſeek her through the world, but ſhe is irrecoverably loſt! Wha would I now give for the ſweet ideas of eternity, which conſole ſo many under their afflictions! What would I not ſacrifice, if I knew for a certainty, that man had ſtill a farther deſtination after his death. I would endure the painful torments of hell, could I hope by that to recover my Thereſa. Why was a form ſo beautiful, created to be the food of worms, that prey indiſcriminately upon the works of nature?—Oh! thou that dwelleſt beyond the ſtars, if thou exiſteſt, reſtore her to me again, and I will believe in thee!!—Ha! what is that? What thoughts prey upon my mind?—Shall I then never more forget her? Will ſhe be always united to

every

every idea?—Wilt thou—eternal Being!—give me a hint of thy exiſtence?—Oh! what a ſea of doubts and uncertainty! Who can ſave me from it?—I ſhake like a reed, which the wind will break. But I will not wait for it—I will prevent it.—I will attain the truth—I will draw back the curtain which hides her from my ſight!"

He walked up and down in the room in violent agitation—He did not ſeem to regard me at all. His eyes glanced upon the ribbon, which he held faſt in his hand. He ſtarted with ſurpriſe. It was green.

"What is this?"—he exclaimed—"Will you tear from me this alſo, ye inviſible powers? I am, perhaps, ſtill to be happy?—Ah!—Ah! Happy!—(after a pauſe).—But I have it ſtill—It is, perhaps, the dear ſhade of my Thereſa that is near me, and will adminiſter comfort to my heart—Hope! Oh! without thee there is no comfort left!"

You ſee, dear Seymour, that he believed the change of the colour was a miracle. If I had dared, it would not have been a difficult taſk for me to unravel the myſtery; for, when I conſider that Biondello has a falſe key to the bureau, the change is eaſily explained; and ſhould we not ſuſpect ſuch a man of every thing? It was very late, and the Prince did not ſeem diſpoſed to retire to reſt.—His mind ſtill dwelt upon his beloved.—His ſoliloquy was a ſtrange mixture of belief and doubt, and both were apparent equally.

"Yes, it will, it muſt be ſo; with the thread of life, will alſo be deſtroyed my piercing torments!" He had ſcarcely finiſhed the

the laſt word, when Biondello ruſhed into the room, and threw himſelf at the Prince's feet.—Alarm and terror were expreſſive in his countenance, his eyes ſeemed ſtarting from his head, his hair was diſhevelled, and he was half dreſſed. "Alas, my gracious Prince!" he at laſt cried, with a tremulous voice, and preſſed himſelf cloſer to him.—The Prince was quite embarraſſed, and ſaid not a word.

"Pardon, pardon, gracious Prince!" exclaimed Biondello again.

"Are you mad, Biondello?" ſaid the Prince. "Why do you aſk my pardon? What have you committed?"

"It would be well if I were mad.—Alas, my gracious, my beloved maſter!"

The Prince had great difficulty to bring him to his ſenſes. At laſt he ſucceeded, and then related his reaſon for this ſtrange conduct; after having entreated once more his pardon for what he ſhould relate. The Prince granted it, and he at laſt began:

"Since your highneſs has devoted your hours to ſolitude, I have led a moſt miſerable life. It is the more painful to me, when I conſider that I have loſt your affection. It ſeemed I was no longer worthy of it, nor of the happineſs to be with you, gracious Prince!—I did not perceive in you any traits of your former humiliation; but, in its place, I beheld your countenance ſhadowed by melancholy. I queſtioned myſelf from what this could proceed.—I doubted whether, from the effect of the apparitions, or the great loſſes you had ſuſtained. But you

you did not reflect upon them at the moment;—it was from mature deliberation, and when there was nothing to be feared. Sudden and violent ſorrow is ſeldom of long duration; but that which comes after it is ſo much the more dangerous, as it takes deeper root, and deprives us of that conſolation which we in general treaſure up for ourſelves. Anxiety for you, gracious Prince, oppreſſed my ſoul, diſturbed me during the day, and chaſed away ſlumber from my eyes. —I had ſcarcely laid myſelf down, and offered up a prayer to my Saviour, and all the ſaints, that they might take you under their protection, when on a ſudden I thought I ſaw a light. I opened my eyes, but I was obliged to ſhut them immediately. A figure ſtood before me in the midſt of ſplendor, which blinded me. I could not on that account open them again.—With an agreeable, yet thrilling voice, it ſpoke as follows:—— "Thy maſter is big with thought, which is ſupported by his diſbelief. He means to fly by ſuicide into futurity, for which he is not yet prepared. I dared not to appear to him myſelf. Tell him this, and warn him of the conſequences of ſo raſh an act."

The Prince turned pale, ſeized Biondello by the collar—"Impoſtor," he exclaimed, with a fearful voice, "you have overheard me!"—Senſeleſs he fell upon the ground. I haſtened to his aſſiſtance; but the Prince prevented me, and dragged him to an arm-chair. His look was ghaſtly. It was a long time before he could recover himſelf, in ſpite of our endeavours. But as ſoon as he opened his

his eyes, he threw himſelf again at the feet of the Prince, and begged pardon, that he was obliged to ſay what he did. The Prince repented his intemperance.

" It is the effect of imagination, Biondello," ſaid he to him; " go to bed. To-morrow I will ſend a phyſician to you. I forgive your conduct, becauſe it ſhews your love for me. Be compoſed on my account, and go to bed."

" I have not dreamed, gracious ſir, and my fancy has not at all deceived me.—Behold here is the proof of it."—He put ſomething into the hand of the Prince, who looked at it with aſtoniſhment. " Yes, it is," he exclaimed, " It is the ring of my Thereſa, which I gave her on her birth day. —Oh what a day of happineſs was that to me!—But how came it into thy hands? How is that poſſible?—She took it with her into her grave, I ſaw it myſelf!"

" The ſpirit gave it to me."—" Here," ſaid he, after having uttered thoſe dreadful words, " carry this to your maſter, and tell him that patience and reſignation will be his beſt guide.—He diſappeared, and I haſtened hither."

" Hope and patience conduct us to the end which we deſire!—What is this!—If ſhe—It cannot be her—"

At this moment there was a great knocking at our gate; it was opened, and the Marquis Civitella came in. — His dreſs, as alſo his countenance, indicated the greateſt embarraſſment: from his eyes flaſhed anxiety and fear. He haſtened immediately into the Prince's room;

room; and when he ſaw him he ſeemed to be more tranquil. — Can you gueſs, friend, for what purpoſe he came hither at ſuch an unuſual time?—He had ſeen the ſame apparition as Biondello had; every word was the ſame, only that he did not obtain the ring, which the Prince had forced, with great difficulty upon his finger. It is therefore but too true, that he alſo belongs to the party, and that all this is an invention. I cannot doubt it for a moment. If I were not already a little prepared for their plans, they would have deceived me, ſo maſterly did they act their parts. And I muſt give myſelf credit, that I looked upon all this for deceit, and not for fact, ſo great was their deception. Judge yourſelf, by that, if it was poſſible for the Prince to doubt a moment on the ſubject, and the ring.—from whence they obtained that I ſhould like to know. As far as I can learn, the Greek lady is buried in the vault of a church of the convent . . . where no perſon can obtain an eaſy acceſs. We muſt preſume then, that there are ſome monks of the order engaged in the execution of the plan; and even if they knew not any thing of this circumſtance, they may have been corrupted by money; which, from the character of the prieſts, I naturally conclude muſt have been a conſiderable ſum. Do not laugh at my obſervation, if it ſhould ſeem ſingular to you. I thought it neceſſary to refute what you ſaid in your laſt letter;—that the deſire of acquiring wealth might probably be in the aim of the conſpirators. That is certainly not the caſe; for what ſums of money might they not already have ſpent, which the Prince, in his preſent ſituation,

ſituation, never could repay them? And if that was their aim, could they not have obtained it quicker and ſurer? How you came at preſent to have ſuch an idea, I cannot comprehend. Do not deceive yourſelf with the deluſive dream of hope: and, for heaven's ſake, do not believe that your bank-notes will be ſufficient to ſubvert the plans which are laid for the Prince. Let us make uſe of them for our own ſupport, whilſt we are endeavouring to deſtroy their views. And that cannot happen until I experience more of the buſineſs; for we are not able, at preſent, to prevent the attacks upon the Prince's religious opinions, unleſs his good genius ſhould aſſiſt us; but we cannot expect that at preſent. I am not perfectly clear as to the extent of their deſign. I believed that they wiſhed to make the Prince a mere proſelyte; for we already have a number of inſtances of the kind, and of the tricks made uſe of by the church, to tear what they call a ſtray ſheep from the claws of the devil. But this ſeems to me very improbable, for they would have found this an eaſier taſk than that which they are purſuing. And what could induce the old man to have ſaid, that he had already ſought to bring the Count of . . d . . . over to his plans, if he did not mean to prove himſelf a pitiful boaſter, which could not have been his intention. But, becauſe I cannot find out their aim, it does not prove that it muſt neceſſarily be the deſire of acquiring authority. If I was willing to entertain you with more probabilities, I could fill my letter with them. But what am I about? I ſee that my letter has increaſed very much, and yet I

have not related to you all that my heart wiſhes, and what it is neceſſary for you to know. You ſee how clearly I was determined to ſupport my opinion. Have you entirely forgotten that I like to quarrel with you, and that you uſed to call me, in a joke, the quarrelſome friend? This harangue is ſufficient to recal that to your memory.

Civitella ſtaid with us the remainder of the night. They had no idea of retiring to reſt; I was therefore obliged to call up the cook, to prepare a meal as quickly as poſſible *.

They ſat themſelves down to the table, but had no appetite. In vain did Civitella endeavour to be witty; in which he, in general, ſucceeds very well. The converſation turned upon apparitions, and Civitella now found an opportunity to reproach the Prince for his former coolneſs towards him. He excuſed himſelf, by pleading the ſtate of his mind. Civitella ſeemed ſatisfied, but begged of the Prince to follow the methods which he would propoſe, to eradicate his diſorder. His plans were all of ſuch a nature, that he could not help ſmiling; and by that means he ſucceeded, at laſt, to make the company ſomewhat merry; to which the Prince, however, contributed very little, but gave no ſigns of diſſatisfaction. He at laſt promiſed to follow the advice of the Marquis,

* At Venice this is not at all extraordinary; for the deſire of eating is (probably on account of the ſea air) very great. We ſeldom ſee Venetians without having ſomething to eat in their hands. In the city, on every ſide, you ſee victuals of all kinds to be ſold. Even at the Opera-houſes you are frequently interrupted by the noiſe of ſellers of proviſions; and in every houſe at midnight you find victuals preparing.

Marquis, who could not conceal his joy on the occaſion.

" Then, we have you again, my Prince," he exclaimed in exultation.

" Do not triumph too ſoon, Marquis," ſaid the Prince, " Will you always be able to find the right means to chaſe away my gloomy thoughts ?"

" Always, if you follow my advice, gracious Prince !"

" You flatter yourſelf too much.—When you have proved it to my ſatisfaction I will believe you ; but I fear that you will not ſucceed ſo eaſily as you expect."

" Do you know that confidence is half the remedy ? —Above every thing elſe, likewiſe, comply with my firſt requeſt, and rather make yourſelf acquainted with the corporeal than the ſpiritual world ; for, although I know, by experience, your influence in the latter, I nevertheleſs cannot help fearing, that the gloom, which is the inſeparable attendant upon creatures devoid of fleſh and bones, might have a greater effect upon your mind.—But did the apparition, which I beheld this night, appear in conſequence of your command, or have I incurred your diſpleaſure by any other means ?"

Civitella betrayed great anxiety as he ſpoke theſe laſt words, and the Prince ſneered — probably from the aſſociation of ideas. The Prince ſoon reſumed his former countenance.

I was obliged now to ſerve tea, and could not hear the end of the converſation ; yet I concluded, from ſeveral words which I caught by accident, and from the Prince's countenance, that it had taken a happy turn, and that

that the entertainment muſt have ended very well. The midnight hour is paſt, and altho' I would willingly chatter with you a little longer, I muſt finiſh my letter—I wiſh for repoſe.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.